

Περὶ Πολυπαιδίας.

OR, A

DISCOURSE

Concerning the Having

Many CHILDREN.

IN WHICH

The ~~Prejudices~~ against a NUMEROUS
OFFSPRING are Removed.

And the ~~Objections~~ Answered.

In a Letter to a Friend.

by Sam. Dugard.

IMPRIMATUR,

Nov. 14.
1694.

R. A. BARKER.

L O N D O N :

Printed for W. Rogers, at the *Sun* against
St. Dunstan's Church in Fleetstreet. 1695.

Th.

8. U. 115.



TO THE
READER.

THE following Letter was design'd as an Expression of Private Respect to a Worthy Friend, and for Private Use; but may, 'tis thought, not be unserviceable further abroad, (since among others, with which we are sufficiently provided, a Discourse of this Nature seems to be somewhat wanting); for the giving Encouragement to some Honest Parents, whose Issue is Numerous; for the affording some apposite Instructions to such their Issue; for the obtaining a more favourable Opinion of them with others; and, possibly also, for the nourishing a more just Esteem of Marriage; which, from the apprehension of great Disadvantages attending a Number of Children, is, by more than a few, declined and spoken against; sometimes to the betraying themselves

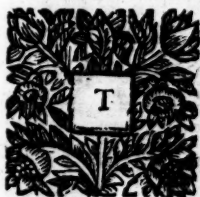
To the Reader.

into Dishonourable Embraces, and a Spurious Offspring, whereby Estates are Wasted, not Inherited; and good Families brought to Meanness, if not to Nothing. If these Ends shall in any measure be obtain'd, the Small Pains that have been taken in a Subject, which so far as I know, hath not any where on purpose been treated of, will be abundantly requited.

A
DISCOURSE

Concerning the
Having Many CHILDREN.

DEAR SIR,



THOUGH the kind Reception I have often found with you, hath afforded many things so taking, as would have abundantly required my Visits, notwithstanding I had gone far for the making of them; yet nothing struck me with so unusual a Pleasure, as *your fair Number of Children; (Fourteen)* placed orderly in a Row before me. I could not but secretly own your Happiness, in having so many without any Defect in Body or Intellectuals: And from their being so exactly managed, methought I visibly read in them, tho Young, the Characters of those Comforts which good Parents would wish from them when grown up. And who are they that, to

the Honour which they have for you in other respects, would not add one large degree more, from this Multiplication of God's Favours upon you?

Yet, *Sir*, 'tis easy to be observed, how *degrading* a thing a great Number of Children is by many look'd upon to be: How the *Parents* of such are esteem'd little better than *Objects of Pity*, perhaps *meaner*. And tho some of the better sort will use a Religious Phrase, and say such Children are a Blessing, yet they'll give us to understand, That it is a Blessing rather to be *born* than *wish'd* for. If themselves are in the Married Row, they will, it may be, desire Issue for the Continuing of their Names; but they will prescribe their Number; and *More* shall be as much *pray'd against*, as *These* are *pray'd for*; and the Almighty, if he will have their Thanks, must see that he *multiply* Them not *too much*.

They either deserve blame, or else have *good Reasons*, who think and carry it thus. But tho I have had the hap to hear, not only what in a *pleasant Freedom* could be said, but also what some (otherwise of Sense enough) have, in *seemingly good earnest*, been *willing* to say, yet the Chief Reasons that I could ever discern to be *commonly urged*, are no other than what may be reduced to these Particulars:

I. The Hinderance that Many Children are to Great Undertakings.

II. A Free and Generous Way of Living being hereby maimed and cut short.

III. An Uneasiness still sitting upon Parents, from their being solicitous for Many.

IV. The Afflictions that arise from Some, who in all probability, among so Many, will not prove well.

V. A man's Name sinking into Meanness, by reason that where there are Many Children, there is no likelihood that a plentiful Provision can be made for them all.

There are Two others less commonly spoken of.

The former I find among some of old, who called themselves Christians, and would have been thought more *The Gnosticks.* knowing than others; which may be improved into an Argument against a plenteous Issue thus: viz. That where Such is,

there are the more brought into a Miserable World, and larger Food is thereby afforded unto Death. Which things were look'd upon to be either so ill in their Nature, or so deplorable in their Prospect,

Διδάσκοντες μὴ εἶναι
παραδίδωσθαι γάμον, καὶ
παιδοποιΐαν, μηδὲ ἀντι-
σάγειν τῷ κόσμῳ δι-
σχυρίζοντας ἑτέροισι, μη-
δὲ ἐπιχρηγείν τῷ Θε-
ῷ τρεφού. Clem. A-
lexand. Strom. l. 3.

that they were thought a Plea strong enough for an Abstinence even from Marriage, and Procreation of Children. However, tho Misery and Death were extravagantly made use of for such Abstinence, yet perhance they may be enough

to cause a man *in pity to wish*, That his *Number* may not be great.

The latter is this ;

That since there are so many *Snares* and *Temptations* in the world, and the *Number* of those that are good men is very small in comparison of those that are otherwise ; may not the *Fears* and *Probabilities* of so many being miserable in another world, be a sad *Argument* against a *Numerous Offspring* to *Religious Parents* ? who are in doubt whether it would not be better that such *Offspring* should never be at all, or should dye when as yet secure in *Infancy*, than be in too sure danger of *mis-carrying* as to a *Future State*.

I know not whether these (at least some of them) do deserve answering : But though they should not in themselves be worthy a Reply, yet the *Rashness* and *Uncharitableness* of some persons in relation to them, may require that somewhat be said. And if I, who you know am a great Lover of Children, (and even the more so where they are many) shall endeavour to do it, (especially now, when a new Increase of mine own Family something prompts me to it, and the Distemper that hath broke in amongst us, in great measure denies me the Conversation of my Friends) it may be, Sir, I shall not by You be look'd upon as one who knows not how to spend a Leisure Hour that lies upon his hand.

But first it will not be amiss to lay down some Considerations in Favour of Children and their Number ;

Number ; so there will be a fairer way made to the answering the Objections brought against them.

The *first Consideration* shall be taken from that *Natural Affection* with which God hath endued Parents, and which is of equal Force, towards *Many Children* as towards a *Few*. This is wrought into *other Creatures*, whose Young need the being cherished and fed by them, as well as into *Man* ; and * many no less true than strange Accounts there are, that shew how strong it is.

* Plutarch de
Amore Proliis.

And yet as soon as ever the young ones are able to find their food, and can subsist of themselves, this Natural Inclination towards them cools and ceases : And in many sorts of *Creatures*, while it doth last, it is only in the *Females*, the *Males* being altogether unconcerned. But in *Human Kind* it is of much *greater Continuance* ; Children standing in need of tender usage, and incessant Provisions, much more and longer than the Young of any other *Creatures* in the world do ; the full *Maturity* of *most*, and the *Old Age* of *many* of *These* being come, before the *Youth* of *Those* is well enter'd upon by them : And the Father's Care is all along as requisite as the Mother's Indulgence. Nay, when Ripeness of Years and Understanding hath taught them to live of themselves, and placed them beyond a Parents eye, they yet live not without being affectionately own'd by them, and are never beyond

yond the kind expressions of their Love, which leave them not while life lasteth.

Now when such strong Affections and Inclinations which cannot be withstood, are planted by God in Parents for the nourishing and educating of Children, shall Children where they are many, be meanly esteemed? Doth not the same Tenderness and Love receive a Seventh, as doth a First? And even yet if they be doubled, is not the Last as Dear as any in the Number? Nay, what if Affection and Tenderness shall grow stronger, as the Number grows the greater?

We find that *Joseph* was loved by his Father *Jacob* more than any of the rest, because he was, after the Birth of many others, *the Son of his Old Age*. And *Benjamin* the Youngest of Twelve was with such an Affectionate Reluctance parted with into *Egypt*,

that *if evil should befall him in the way, the gray hairs of his aged father would be brought down with sorrow to the grave*.

And why should any one speak against a Numerous Issue, when those whose it is, are very well pleas'd with it; and when *himself* also, if he had such, would be quite of another mind? On the one hand, in doing so, he would be *injurious to them*; on the other, *inconsistent with himself*. But let us suppose a man to have many Children, and to complain of them because they are many: He is overcharged with them, and his hands are so full that he knows not which way to turn himself; and if God would please to take

take one or more of them, he should esteem it a Mercy : Well ; say which thou wouldst part with : Shall this that is next at hand go ? No ; this thou canst not spare. Shall this then be he ? Or that other ? Thou art not willing to leave these neither. But why should *These* be more dear to thee than the *Rest*, not yet look'd on ? Let some of *Those* go then. No ; They are thy Children too. But if thou canst not part with any, why dost thou then complain of them ? Or if thy desires have been heard above, and thou art therefore depriv'd of one or more of them by death, why lamentest thou as under a Loss thou canst not bear ; and a thousand times wishest thou wert so happy as to have them again ? What I have been speaking concerning the great Force of Natural Affection, and the equal strength it hath to *More* as to *One*, a Story in *Sozomen's Ecclesiastical History*, l. 7. c. 24. pertinently confirms, though in a sorrowful manner : A Merchant in the *Theſſalonian* Slaught-er caus'd by the Emperor *Theodosius*, had two Sons which were to be put to death : He, in Agonies of Affection, offered himself to dye in their stead, if so they might be spared : The Soldiers touch'd with Compassion at his Tears and Complaints, would freely have yielded up One of them to him, but durst not Both, because the Number commanded to be slain, would have fallen short : The sad Father lamenting himself and them, knew not whether to chuse ; but through equal Yearnings on both, remain'd in a continued

nued suspense till they were both together slain. A wise man will consider the Nature of things, and will conclude that God would not put such strong Affections into Fathers and Mothers, if Children were not creatures that were worthy of them. And if some Inconveniencies attend a greater number, which a less would be free from, yet he looks upon the Providential Order of things, and from the Beauty of it doth wholly acquiesce; acknowledging it by no means fit, that a *private Humour*, or *some Pleasure*, or even the *leading a life with less Care*, but not *more Virtue*, should put by the *great Designs* of Nature. To endeavour by *idle Reasonings* to lessen, or on *trivial accounts* to undervalue those Affections in men, which in other creatures remain uncorrupted, and duly obtain their end, is extremely disingenuous, and a bad requital in any one, for that Tenderneſs which was shewed to himself when young; especially if he were One of Many. It will be requisite that such a one be put in mind, that *ἀσποροι*, those that are without Natural Affection, are in Sacred Writings ranked among the * vilest sorts of men; and unless he much alter, 'tis pity he should ever have better Company.

* Rom. i. 31.

2 Tim 3. 3.

It may not seem unapposite to the present purpose to take notice that the Heathen Ancients assign'd particular Offices to many of their gods, in all things relating to the *Production* of Children, and their

† August. de
Civ. Dei, l 6.
c. 9.

their *Increases* afterwards. The recounting of them may well be spared; but we may reasonably conclude thus much from them; *viz.* That the strongest Natural Affections in *Parents* could not but be thought to be justly order'd towards Children; and that a kind Esteem and Carriage in *Others* was not more than requisite, when such a Number of Deities were imagin'd to exercise so various a Care of them.

Indeed at *Athens*, where Humanity might seem to be encouraged more than in other places, by Arts and Sciences, there was the great Inhumanity of * *Exposing* Children to the Mercy of Fortune, if 'twere thought convenient.

* Inceptio est Ametitium, haud Amantium; Quicquid peperisset decreverunt tollere. i. e. Educare. *Terrent. Andr.*

A thing which *Plato* also gave room unto in his Commonwealth. And in † *Sparta* there were Searchers appointed by the State to inspect new-born Children, whether they were deform'd or imperfect; and if such, they were by Publick Decree ordered to be destroyed. But such Cruelty as this, which had the Favour of Philosophy, the Connivence and even Establishment of Laws, hath a chief place (as * a Learned Person observes) among those more *Eminent Works of the*

† *Plutarch in Lycurgo.*

* *Jo. Edwards in Johan. 3. 8.*

Devil, which the Son of God came into the world to destroy, and is to be abominated on that account. But should any abominate the Custom, but yet at the same time disesteem and declaim

declaim against the Number on which it was exercised, (which Natural Affection doth equally embrace as it doth a less one) ; or should deny Pity where a Bodily Defect is perhaps made up by a larger share of Soul ; however, takes not away the Being of human kind, he (to speak mildest of him) is by no means so good a Friend as he ought to be, either to *Nature's Dictates*, or those of *Christianity*.

The Second Consideration shall be this ; viz. That men desire *all other things* may be fruitful to them. It much delights them to see the *Valleys stand so thick with Corn*, that the *Mower may fill his hand*, and the *Binder of Sheaves his Bosom*. Their Ewes attended on each side with a Lamb, can hardly escape without their Praises, tho they understand them not. And when their Trees are so much laden with Fruit, that they e'en bend under their Burden, they with Pleasure run to their aid, and afford them the best supports they can. The like Pleasure is in the Increases of Fowl ; and it would much rejoice them if their Rivers were like *Tibiscus*, Two parts Water, and One part Fish. Now when Fruitfulness is every where so much desired, so much delighted in, shall it not be so only in our selves ? Shall that of the *Womb*, amidst *all other Increases*, have Discontent attending it, or no other than feign'd Joys ? They had quite other thoughts in older times, when it was esteemed a Sign of the Piety and *Chastity* of the Woman †,

man †, and of the great Benevolence of the gods, if she brought forth *Two Children at a Birth*; and answer'd the liberal Intendments of Nature, by having an Infant hanging at each Breast. Nothing was more desired or esteemed than such Fruitfulness; which would too plainly appear, were it fit to mention the * Rites which their new-married Women not unwillingly observed towards their *Mutinus*, that they might not be steril. And indeed to what end should there be Fruitfulness every where else, and Barrenness in the House? I may truly say, That the Master of large Increases might be reckoned poor in the midst of them, if he had not some better Increases of his own to enjoy them together with him: For small comfort it would be that other things should bring forth to himself alone, when it is † meet that Children should rejoice in them equally with him; or even more, since their Age would be more fit for the using them. We find an Example even in the Father of the Faithful: Tho he were *rich in Cattel, and Silver and Gold*, and had the Promise of the Almighty's being his *Shield*, and *exceeding great Reward*, yet that satisfied him not, but he breaks

out

† Piam & pudicam
ut scias Uxorem tuam,
Omnium primò Alc-
mena Geminos peperit
filios. Sine me dicere,
ut scias, tibi tuæque
Uxori Deos esse omnes
propitios. *Plaut. Am-
phit.*

* Arnob. l. 4.
August. de Civ. Dei,
l. 6. c. 9.

† Quem pariter uti
hos docuit aut etiam
amplius, Quòd illi ætas
magis ad hæc utenda
idonea est. *Terent. Heaut.*

Gen. 15. 2.

out into that passionate expression,
Lord God, what wilt thou give me, seeing I go childless, and the steward of my house is this Eliezer of Damascus? As much as to say, All the Wealth which I have, and what further thou wilt give me, wants very much of being truly pleasant to me, while I have none to inherit it after me. And though there be in mine House an Hand ready for it (otherwise deserving enough), yet what satisfaction is there in a Foreign Heir, and not sprung from mine own Loins? Every one would, in respect of himself, have it continue a Proverb, That it belongs † to a poor man to number his Cattel: And shall it be esteemed the property of

† *Pauperis est numerare pecus.*

a rich man to have few or no Children to number? It is an ill hearing, when other Possessions shall have the name of Riches, and Children, on whose account those chiefly are so, shall be thought quite otherwise. O how

* *Valer. Max. l. 4.*

may that *Roman Matron* * *Cornelia*, the great *Africanus's* Daughter, be the Reproach of such persons! who to a Lady that in a Visit boasted much of her Rich Jewels and Precious Ornaments, shewed her Sons, then little Children, but afterwards Brave Men; and said, *These, Madam, are my Jewels, these my Ornaments.* I know it may be said, That *Large Increases* in the *Field* and elsewhere, and *Moderate* ones at *Home*, make up the best Account of Riches. But why should Nature be so liberal in

in Meat, and so sparing in Mouths?
 And if *Riches increase, why should not* Eccles. 5. 11.
they increase that eat them? The
 great difference between those who are called
 Rich, and those who are thought not so, is very
 often this, That *Servants* eat the Increases of
 the one, and *their own Children* the Increases of
 the other; and surely these latter may seem the
 more agreeably fed, and to the greater Content
 of the Owners. Let me add this, That the
Growing of other things, and the entertaining
 Variety that is in them, afford indeed a great
 deal of Pleasure; a curious Description of one
 sort of which, viz. in Corn, (and others in-
 clude no less fine matter for the
 like) * *Cicero* makes his *Cato Major* * Cic. de Se-
 give, as being wonderfully divert- nest:
 ing and recreative to his Old Age. But yet cer-
 tainly all this to a person that is any whit ob-
 serving, must be much inferior to that which is
 in Children. The first Buddings, as it were,
 of Reason: The Pretty Expressions of it in
 harmless Actions: The pleasant Attempts to-
 wards Speech, and the no less pleasant missings
 of it: The little Contrivances for what they
 would obtain: The easy Mirth; the undesign-
 ing Affection, and all these, and a great many
 more, differently repeated in the Way and Tem-
 per of every Child by himself, are extremely
 delightful. Take also other Increases when they
 are at their full Growth and Maturity, and com-
 pare them with these: When they have escaped

Blasts and Mildews, pinching Frosts and Scorching Heats, they are then a Treasure: But yet consider them not in order to Children, and how much do they lose of their Value? Or turn them into their Price, and lock them in thy Chest, and how silent and unactive do they lye? But thy Treasure in thy Children thou canst converse with, canst enjoy thy self in it, and find Duty and Love from it. These can value the Pleasure thou takest in them, and can make such returns as shall be more and new Pleasures to thee. Other Increases without these are *call'd*, but *are not* Riches; but these only, with a Competency of the other, are not *call'd*, but *are so*; and, if I may say it, are so

* *Id egit rerum natura, ut ad bene vivendum non magno apparatu opus esset. Senec. ad Hilviam.*

at a much more easy rate; for * Nature is contented with a little. When they are grown up, and instructed to get their Livelihood by their Labour, their Aged Sire hath answer'd the expectation of the world, and done his Duty by them. *They* live, and he rejoiceth in them; and *They*, not being tempted by the large Increase of Fields and Flocks (which he hath not) to hope for his Death, do wish he may long live, that they may long express their Love and Respect to him.

The last Consideration (and which is chiefly to be mention'd) shall be this, *viz.* That the great Creator of the world would not have *Children*

Men come into Being otherwise than in a Decent and Sanctified way ; such as should be suitable to their Place and Degree in the nature of things, and should call for Respect towards them when they are born : And therefore no sooner had he made Man, but Gen. 2. he ordain'd Marriage, and honour'd it so far, as himself to Give the Woman : For 'tis said ver. 22. That he brought her to the man. The Inclinations of other Creatures are suffered to range, they being incapable of knowing what Laws mean : But the Appetites that are loose and ungovern'd in them, are in Men regulated by Honesty and Religion. And hence I doubt not, but as a consequence of this Divine Institution, Marriage in all Civilized Nations was made the Foundation of Posterity, and was celebrated with Religious Rites. Among the Jews especially, (whom God had separated for his own People) it had great Solemnities, and many joyful Expressions, which Time had taught them to add or vary, as they thought most becoming. The House in which the Marriage-Rites were performed, was called the House of Praise, and their † Song was in part this, ' Blessed be thou, O Lord, who hast created Joy and Gladness, the Bridegroom and the Bride. The voice of Joy in the Bride-Chamber is more delightful than any Feast, and Children sweeter than any Song.

† Godw. Mes.
and Aaron, l. 6.

It was indeed permitted them (for the Hardness of their hearts) to put away Wives as occasion seem'd to require ; but yet the Children

of those Wives that were put away
Deut. 21. 15. (or hated) were to be retain'd by
16. their respective Fathers, and esteem-
 ed their Privilege, not their Burthen: Whereas
 in relation to the Issue of her who was not thus
 solemnly taken, it was otherwise;
* Gen. 21. 10. for those might be * cast out with
& Gal. 4. 30. the Mother, and not suffered to
 partake with the other Sons; it not being unfit
 that they should lose a Privilege, whose en-
 trance into the world was not answerable to the
 Excellence of their Nature.

Neither was Issue design'd only to be Honou-
 rable by Mariage, but Numerous also: For he
 who created Man in his own Image, and knew
 how to exert his Goodness to the best advantage,
 would do it no otherwise than in this Blessing,
Gen. 1. 28. *Be fruitful, and multiply, and reple-
 nish the earth;* as if there could not
 be a greater Happiness, than that Man, who
 was so Excellent in his Nature, should be Large
 in his Number. And herein he may seem to
 have a Privilege in some sort even beyond those
 Celestial Beings who were created superior to
 him. They indeed, in the state they are in,
 have a perpetual Existence; but this their
 Existence is inclosed in themselves alone, and
 they are not more, nor more ever will be, than
 they hitherto have been. But Man, tho he be
 short in his Duration here, doth yet transmit
 himself with advantage to his Offspring, who
 are his own Flesh and Blood, and in whom he
 not

not only is continued, but extended and enlarged: An Ornament this, as to Human Nature in general, so more peculiarly to those Persons or Families who have above others been thus increased. When it was promised that the *Israelites* should be *bleſſed above all people*, the chief expreſſion of their being thus bleſſed, was, *That there ſhould not be male nor female barren among them, Deut. 7. 14.* And the happineſs of *Jeruſalem* after its Reſtoration, was character'd by nothing more than this, *That it ſhould be full of Boys and Girls playing in the ſtreets thereof, Zech 8. 5.* And truly the Increase of Children was the chief reaſon why (through a conniv'd-at Irregularity) by one man more Wives than one were taken; it being, as they thought, no leſs for the Reputation of Marriage to give Birth to Many Children, than for the Credit of Children to have their Way made into the World by Marriage. Hence not only in the *fiſt Ages*, when the earth was to be peop'ed, but all along after, when it was well inhabited, where there was any Woman unfruitful in the Wedded ſtate, it was eſteemed a Diſgrace to her: Even *Sarah* the Miſtreſs when barren, was deſpiſed in the eyes of her Maid: And this Gen. 16. 4. may be thought the reaſon of the Angel's words concerning *Elizabeth*, (*S Luke 1.*) *This is the ſixth month with her that was (by way of Reflection and Reproach) called barren.*

Nay, when any Husband had the unhappineſs of dying without Iſſue, God himſelf was pleaſed

sed to repair his Reputation, by establishing a Law for the making him in some sort fruitful even after his Death; his Brother being commanded to take his Relict, and raise up seed to the deceased. The denying of which, through envy and ill nature, to Er, was a great Ingre-dient of Onan's Transgression. The not being continued either the one way or the other, was esteemed a sad effect of the Divine Displeasure: And some there are, who (though I dare not say how truly) interpret the Punishment of a *soul's being cut off from his people*, to be meant of a man's dying Issueless, and leaving none behind him otherwise to bear his Name. 'Tis certain it was a Proverb among the Jews, That *the Man who is without Children, is without Life*; and perhaps this came as no mean thing into the account of that of Solomon, *The name of the wicked shall rot.*

But lest at any time (as who knows what Extravagancies men at length might be guilty of) *Luxurious Pleasures* should prevail over *Domestick Cares*, and the *Greatness of Childrens Number* should be thought a *Diminution* of the Blessing, God from the very beginning, and so onwards to future Ages, would have it known, that the *Bestowing of Children* did so belong to himself, as to be in a peculiar manner esteemed *his Favour*. Thus in the very first Child that was born into the world, the Mother saith, *I have gotten a Man from the*

the Lord. And when *Rachel* discontentedly cried, Give me children, or else I dye; *Jacob* replied with great concern, *Am I in God's* Gen. 30. 1, 2. *stead, who hath withheld from thee the fruit of the womb?* Hence among the four Keys which the Jews say God hath reserved in his own keeping, and not imparted either to Angel or Seraphim, That of the *Womb* is one. If a multiplied Offspring do not prove so large a Favour as we have represented it, let the fault be laid where else it will, it can by no means be attributed either to the *Bounty* of the Giver, or the *Nature of the Gift*: For by the former the greatest and most noble Ends were design'd; and in the latter there is a Power of prosecuting those Ends by Actions not unsuitable. The not exerting of which Power by such Actions, will be their very great fault.

All these Honours to Children are firmly continued under the *Gospel*, with the addition of one more, much greater in regard of their regular and decorous coming into the world; not only in that Marriage is reduced to its *Primitive Perfection of joyning only Two together*, and making the *Conjunction of no less length than life*, (to the honour of the Female Sex, which by a frequency of Divorces had been undervalued); but also, and chiefly, in that it is exalted into a *very great mystery*: By Ephes. 5. 23. which it will not be an Untruth to say, that *Children* are now more holy than of old they were; and that *Mothers*, however the Woman being

being in the Transgression, ~~was in sorrow to bring forth~~, may yet find Comfort in the Promise, That they shall be saved; ~~διὰ τῆς παιδογονίας~~, in or
by Childbearing, if they continue in
 1 Tim. 2. 15. *Faith, &c.*

Now, Sir, (to look back a little on what hath been said) Can any so far forget all these Honours that have been done to Children, and the great account that a Numerous Issue hath been of, as not to esteem them by so much the more, by how much their number is the greater? When a Jew, or some Heathens, would object, That Marriage being restrained by our Lord to One Man and One Woman, is the hindrance of those larger Progenies which they through more Wives so much desire and prize, it surely will look very ill if a Christian shall think much and complain of here and there a plentiful Sight of Children as an *Excess*, where those others in general would blame the *Defect*. I know it is said,

*Vid. D. Allix's
 Reflections on
 Genesis.*

That the Ancients having an excessive desire to accomplish the Promise of the Messias, and not knowing of whom he would be born, did every one hope he might be a Descendant from Them in particular; and did therefore endeavour to make their Families as Numerous as they could, that themselves or some of theirs might inclose him; but there is ~~not~~ no such reason to desire such multiplied Offsprings.

And yet (to reply a little), Why should there not be as much reason for Us to desire a
 Numerous

Numerous Race, as to the Ancients there was? The forementioned Privilege of a Messias, *as yet to be born*, could at the last have been properly but to one Family, or one Branch of a Family, and others must in some respects have miss'd of their Hopes: But *Our Children*, how many soever they be, have a certain and more appropriated Benefit and Honour in the Messias *now come*; since they both ought to be, and easily may be, those whom our Lord himself hath pronounced more blessed than the Womb that

bare him, and the Paps that gave him suck? Luk. 11. 27, 28. Did we consider, that when a Child is born, there is one come into life, who is so many ways the Care of Heaven, and prevented with very great Blessings before as yet his Understanding is come to him; who will hereafter be capable of doing rational Service to his Maker, of having Righteousness and Goodness exercis'd towards himself, and of exercising the like Virtues in like manner towards others. And were we true lovers of men, and such as would not suffer some mean Pleasures, or a vain show in the world, to outweigh our affections to them, we should from a larger Issue rather esteem it an *Excellence*, that Human Nature is thereby extended, than an *Inconvenience* that the Cares and Solitude of Life are thereby increased.

And yet I have sometimes thought (not without some concern) how much esteem they purchase, what large honour they obtain, who are so fortunate in the Field as to *slay many*; yea, though

though perhaps by *Treachery* and *Deceit*, rather than by *Courage* and *Valour*. If Blood be spilt, and Lives lost, (be it by what methods there soever) 'tis sufficient both for a Name and Reward: Whereas to be in a *Lawful* and *Honest* way the Author of the *Lives* of *Many*, and to beget those who possibly hereafter may some way or other be very beneficial to their Country, is look'd upon with a very indifferent eye. Little is said of it ; little, however, to the person's advantage: He is thought through his *Family-Increases* to have been his own injury, and by *living Fetters* (poor man) to be deprived of liberty. So much more glorious is it to *destroy*, than to *make* men ; and to give *Death* to *Enemies*, than *Birth* to those that will in the next Age be *Friends*.

The world, Sir, is alter'd, and men now-a-days are much *wiser* or much *worse* than in earlier Generations they were ; who are *afraid* of what they so much *wish'd* for ; who look upon the *Fruitfulness* of *Wives* to be *less eligible* than their *Barrenness* ; and had rather their Families should be *none*, than *large* : As if the *Communion*, † *Write this man childless*, had exchange'd its *Malignity* with this, *Write this man in his Offspring numerous* ; and the *Gifts* of God now were become a *greater Punishment* than heretofore his *Denials* were. I yet speak this but of *Some* ; the Age hath (to its Honour) its *wise* and *good men*, who though they are fewer, do notwithstanding much outweigh

weigh the other, and are the best strength of our Argument against them.

These, with the foregoing Considerations, may something make for a plentiful Offspring, and prevail, if not for its being desired before-hand, yet at least for its being humanely received, and not discontentedly entertain'd when it is come: The truly where the foundation of Esteem and Love in the present Case is so firmly laid, there should be not merely a *freedom from Discontent*, but a *large Gratefulness* and *Joy* on the account of such a number, and the greatest Care and Solicitousness for their well-doing. The Parents who see themselves to have a *Multiplicated Being* in so Many, and such a close Interest in all of them, (that neither can say, that any the least part in any of them belongs less to the one than to the other, but *equally to either*, and *wholly to both*) may well strive in those methods which more properly belong to each, whether shall outgo the other in carrying on the welfare of them all. And they will not do amiss, if they think that he who bestows upon them such Gifts, doth secretly accompany these his Gifts with such a strict Charge as this: 'See that they be return'd to me answerable to what they were, when first lent to you. Let their Souls, which are capable of the best Productions, be rightly cultivated; and on such Tables as are yet clean and unwritten, let the noble Characters of Righteousness, and Goodness, and Devotion, and all other Virtues be engraven. Be it

'it your Care, that the Number which was so
'great to you by my Bounty, may not become less
'to me through any default of yours: And in-
'deed, happy are they who can say as once our
'B. Lord did in another case, *Those that thou hast*
given us have we kept, and none of
John 17. 12. *them is lost.*

These things being premised, I now, Sir, will answer the Objections: Of which the first was this, *viz. The Hindrance that Many Children are to great Undertakings.*

Yet surely the Educating of Children well, is it self no mean Undertaking. And they that by Prudence and Diligence, by milder Methods intermix'd with well-plac'd Severities, accomplish'd it, bringing up some the Learned way, others to such Callings as are Useful and Creditable, yea, though in due circumstances, to the Plough and Spade, afford a laudable Advantage to the Commonwealth, and deserve well, not only of the present, but also of the next Generation.

But Great Actions and Worthy Designs require a Freedom from * other Cares, for the contriving, and Time for the executing them; which (they'll say) the Father of a Numerous Issue is not at leisure for. We will at present suppose both the one and the other to be so; yet possibly he may by lower actions, (as they usually are accounted) no less increase his own Welfare, and administer to that of the Nation; since both *This* and *That* are ordinarily best carried

* Pectora nostra duas non admittentia curas, Juv.
Sat. 7.

carried on by those Methods which lye nearest to common Industry ; and which the most are not unfit for, if there be but Will and Endeavours answerable to Abilities. He shall never by my consent be blamed for want of great Actions, who in a prudent manner provides for his own, sets a good example of Industry to others, beats down according to what power he hath, but chiefly by his Practice, all Irregularities of Life ; and by a peaceable Conversation in himself, and friendly applications to others, leaves no occasion for Law to force Quierness and good Neighbourhood from him or them.

I would not, Sir, discourage, nor in the least undervalue any of those things that carry the esteem of great Undertakings : Yet truly many of them when they are accomplished, are rather an Ornament than any great Advantage to a Kingdom : But when they miscarry, (and miscarry they frequently do) they shew that the Projectors have been more *Mercurial* than *Wise* ; and that it would better have beseem'd them to have acted in a lower Sphere ; where Reputation, tho not so great, would have been more sure ; and the Publick, in their Private Welfare, been more promoted.

However, let us imagine Great Undertakings not to miscarry, and also to be no less for the Advantage than the Ornament of the Weal-Publick ; yet perchance it makes not a little for their Honour that they are not over-frequent ; they would lose of their Remarkableness should they

they grow too thick; and it is no more requisite that every Family should afford Heroick Actions, than that it should give Birth to Noble Personages. It is sufficient generally for the Vulgar, that Righteousness, and Kindness, and other Sociable Virtues be exercised by them. And those, Sir, who, forsooth, are therefore the more reckon'd among (the *ὁ πολλοί*) the *Many*, because *Themselves are Many*, may seem to act *their Parts* fairly enough, if they in so even and quiet a manner contribute to the Welfare of the Community, as to let very Worthy Deeds retain their Dignity, and not become less conspicuous by any inordinate accession from them to their number. So that consider we those who favour not a Plentiful Offspring, either to be such as are Authors and Promoters of Great and Useful Designs, or to be such as are not: If they are *not* such, they have no reason to find fault with the want of that amongst Many Children, which they cannot shew themselves. If they *are* such, it is surely no hard matter for them to be content, that their own Worthy Deeds are of an higher account, from an Infrequency of the like in others; when yet useful, though more common, Virtues are constantly practised.

But yet, in good truth, I believe that Fathers, upon whom the Cares of many Children have lain, have no less carried on Brave Designs than others. If you will allow of an Example or two; we find that the *Four Sons* and *Five Daugh-*

Daughters of *Appius Claudius*, whom *Cicero* speaks of so often with respect, were no such Hindrance to him, but that he could to the best advantage manage the greatest Concerns of the Roman State. And *Eratimus* an Arabian King, from the great Confidence (as *Justin* tells us, *Lib. 11.*) which he had in his very large number of Sons, invaded *Syria* and *Egypt*, and raised his own, theirs, and his Countrey's Name thereby. Or if you had rather have an Instance from Times something later, † *Tancred*, the Lord of *Hautevil*, coming into *Apulia* about the year 1008, with his Twelve Sons, to the Aid of the *Greeks* against the *Saracens*, (who before with the joint strength of those *Greeks*, having gotten the better of the *Germans* there, strove now in bitter Wars with their Allies for the sole Command) by the Conduct and Valour of those his Sons, together with his own, drove out from thence the Usurping *Saracens*. And afterwards, when he was ill treated by those whom he gave assistance to, and contrary to Covenants was denied his Just Right in the Division of the Spoils, he, with his Domestick Number, which inspirited the Larger Numbers of his Soldiers, punished the Ungrateful *Greeks* so, as to make them seek Habitations elsewhere, and planted in *Apulia* a fourfold Succession of *Norman Kings*; which might have been much more lasting, had there been that Love and Faithfulness in a following *Tancred* towards his Sister, (to whom the Crown was due) as there

† Heylin's
Cosmog.

there was in the first, and his *no less Brave* than *Numerous Offspring one towards another*. Should it be said, That to Persons of such Eminent Rank the Hindrances are taken off by those many Privileges they enjoy, which men of Inferior Quality cannot pretend to; I might answer, That even to those of a Meaner Station, a Plentiful Issue is not such an Hindrance as is pretended: And what their Number hath in some respect given check unto, one or other of that number hath in other respects abundantly made up. So that it is but the taking the compass of a few years, and more is done by the *Father* and his *Many*, than could have been expected to be done by *Himself alone*, or by only some few descending from him. It is usually by such as these, whose Industry is whetted by their Number, that great Affairs both at home and abroad are kept up. Among these we may find Divines in the Temple, Philosophers in the Schools, Pleaders at the Bar, Merchants in the Exchange, and Soldiers in the Field; while the Only Son often sinks in Luxury and Ignorance, and lives a burthen to himself, and little profitable to others.

I must confess, the *greatest Perfection* consisteth in *Unity*; and the Great God that is *perfectly One*, can therefore, because he is so, do all things without needing the assistance of any: But *Number* is for the most part requisite with *Us* for great Undertakings; for we being deficient in our selves, must necessarily call in the Aids of others, or not One Noble Deed, it may be, in
a Thousand

a Thousand would be accomplished. Great Actions, Sir, consist either in the *acquiring* what things are good, or the *defending* our selves against what things are evil; and with respect to *both these*, Children are (by a King of great Designs and much Experience) compared to *arrows in the hand of a giant*: And he is stiled *an happy man who hath his quiver full of them*. What may he not obtain who is thus appointed? and whom may he fear, who is after this manner arm'd? Such a Number will have no cause to be *ashamed*, but *dare speak with enemies in the gate*. Psal. 127. 5.

And yet further, Sir, Actions may be stiled Great, not only *absolutely*, but according to the Rank in which persons are. The better manuring of Ground, and producing out of it more fruitful Harvests, is a deed as commendable in a meaner Station, as the obtaining great Conquests in an higher. Thus the † Man who before the Senate was accused of Witchcraft, because his little Land was fertile beyond that of his Neighbours which lay round about him, would have given some cause for the Suspicion, had he not had a lusty Daughter to handle a Shovel and Dung-fork with him: These were his *Witchcrafts*: And greater, no doubt, they would have been, had his *Laborious Daughter* been well aided by *Laborious Sons*, and his Field large enough for their Industry. I am sure the old Romans, who well understood themselves, if

C

there

† Furius Cresinus, *Plin. lib. 18. Nat. Hist.*

there were but the *Number*, did not question the

† Qui tres liberos
susceperat à Tutelâ ex-
cusabatur ; in Fascibus
sumendis prior erat ;
Tesseram frumenti tri-
plicem accipiebat, &c.

Advantage, when they con-
stituted the † *Jus Trium Li-
berorum* ; which was a Pub-
lick Reward for any that had
Three Children. And 'twere
well (you see, Sir, how

well I'd wish you) the Example were follow-
ed in other Nations, and the Reward increas'd
according as Issue should further increase. In-
deed those who from the word *Proles* (an Off-
spring) had the Name of *Proletarii*, were of
the lowest among the Six Ranks the *Roman* Peo-
ple were divided into: But being by reason of
their Meanness no other way remarkable, they
had *this Appellation* (the best which their Cir-
cumstances would bear) from the Benefit they
brought through their Children to the Common-
wealth. And that they were not in a contemp-
tuous way thus call'd, the great Value which a
Numerous Progeny was of, even among the
Greatest, may abundantly shew: For from such,
the very Consular Dignity (which was the
highest) received a yet further Addition of Ho-
nour; the * *Lex Julia* ordering,

* *Godm. Rom.*
Ant. 13.

That He of the Two Consuls who
had the *more Children*, should have
the Precedence. Which gives us to understand,
That though there might be other very large
Accomplishments, yet that of a Plenteous Issue
(as if in such some very Noble Actions had been
done, or some Worth more than ordinary had
been

been inclosed) was esteemed to confer an Excellence beyond them.

Neither was there Credit only and a Reward to those who by their Offspring contributed to the Common Welfare, but to such as by avoiding Marriage did not do it, there was Punishment also affix'd, and Disreputation: For the

* *Pap. Poppæan Law in Augustus's* time, ordain'd, that their Estates at their Death should be inherited not by Kindred and Relations, but by

* Tacit. Annal. l. 3. cum Notis Savillii.

the People of *Rome*; it being judg'd fit that these should in some sort have amends made them by an addition to their *Treasure*, when thus by a fault there was no Increase of their Number. Indeed as Times then went, the interposing of the Publick Judgment was no more than necessary for the preventing the common Practice which was grown very prejudicial to the State; and is the fault not of that Age alone: But this we may say, That if hereby the *Men* were in any measure wrought upon to secure themselves from the Penalty of a *Single Life*, the good *Women* shewed their Willingness to secure them of a Reward in the Married one; *Excipiendo* (as *Ovid* speaks, *Fast. l. 2.*) *fecunda patienter verbera Dextra*, by cheerfully admitting the Lashes of the *Luperci*; which (as Tradition had taught them) were esteemed of great force towards a Fruitfulness.

And truly the Numerous Offspring are they whom we may reasonably expect most good

from ; since they are educated not with that fond Tenderness which *One alone*, or a *few*, are commonly used to : For when they are capable of understanding themselves, they hear it often repeated to them, That their Industry and the Blessing of God is chiefly to be trusted to by them ; That what is like to be left them will do well, if they be careful and diligent in a Calling, but otherwise will stand them in little stead, and to their shame will quickly be at an end : And they are kept employ'd in matters fit for them ; though sometimes the *Sweat*, and sometimes *Tears* trickle down ; and all this while are not the *less truly*, but the *more manly* loved. By such methods they are train'd up to be considerate and provident, and are fitted for living well, and acting laudably in the world : Which yet had a greater Encouragement added to it in the *State*, which (we said) allowed a Reward to the Parent of Many Children : For he might urge, That it would be a Reproach to *Them*, on whose account he had such a Boon granted, if *They* should not by Sobriety and Sedulousness be in every respect answerable to it. And this might be, as a great Restraint from Idle and Vicious Courses, so an effectual Spur to Commendable Atchievements.

Neither let it be said, That the Scarcity of Men in the *Roman* Empire might require this, but the Excess with us forbids it ; and consequently makes that Number which the *Publick* State doth not need, to be a Burthen to *Private* Families :

Families: For tho I pretend not insight into the great Concerns of Nations, yet I think I may without arrogance affirm, That it would be much more for the Publick Welfare, if where there are *Three* of either Sex, there were at least *Four*. Our Compass would well bear, and our Plenty abundantly maintain it; if so be by the access of Number, Industry (as it may not be fear'd but it would) might be increased. The reason of so many wandring about, and begging their Bread, to the shame of our Nation, is that over-plenty which can tolerate such Drones to be so maintained. But were our *own* Inhabitants as *many* as our Store of Provisions is *great*, there would in the main not be less of Necessaries and Conveniences, but more of Laboriousness and Diligence; while many Heads would be at work to find out new Methods of Advantage, and Hands in all places employ'd for the every-way, compleating them. Consider the vast Numbers in the *Low-Countries*, so much exceeding ours for their space of ground; and the great Thriving of that People, notwithstanding those prodigious Expences they are at for the maintaining their State both in War and Peace; and you can ascribe their great Undertakings and the Success of them, to nothing so much as their Number, and their Industry proceeding therefrom. This is certain, that were our People more, there would be less of that *Idleness* which is the great Corrupter of *Quiet Times*; and in *those of War* there would be a greater willing-

willingness in the common sort to make and recruit the Forces design'd for fighting, since the *Step to the Camp* is much shorter from the *doing Something*, than from the *doing Nothing*: For men may be somewhat excused, if they had rather (when it is so freely held out to them) eat their Bread with Ease and Security, than venture their Lives against an Enemy. I will not make the Inference from all this: 'Tis easy to see how a good store of Children is so far from hindring great Designs and Actions, that they much contribute to them.

But to take one hint or two out of Holy Writ, not unapposite to the matter in hand. Time hath been when the being Instrumental to the *raising of a Religious Offspring*, was termed the *doing worthily in Ephrata, and being famous in Bethle-hem*: A Phrase higher than which a very great Undertaking can hardly either deserve or bear. And the *Jews* (as before was said) honoured the House of Marriage with the Title of House of Praise; not only (as I conceive) with relation to God, but to the *Conjugal Pair* also; as if Praise were above others deserved by them, who after this manner contributed to the Increase of their People: For thus (Psal. 78. 63.) *Their Maidens were not praised, is rendred, were not given in Marriage.* I am sure that signal Testimony of Respect which *Solomon* gave to those who had newly entred the Married State, was very expressive of this: For in his Glorious
Tem.

Temple (as † Writers of Jewish Affairs tell us) he built one Gate of Eminent Note on purpose for them to pass through, that they might have the concurrent Salutations and Prayers of the People; which were to this effect; 'That he who had his Dwelling in 'that House would make them joyful through a 'fruitful Womb. As if all both Private and Publick Welfare proceeded therefrom. And as a * Learned Person informs us, they look'd upon the man who obstinately refused Marriage, to be allied to those who violated the Sixth Commandment: He in some respect *taking away* life, who when he lawfully might, would *not give* it. And truly if Man be of such value in himself, and God's Favour the greater when the Number is increased, the Actions that are concerned in bringing up a Numerous Offspring, do obtain a Worth from the Dignity of their Nature, and from their Number too, about whom they are conversant.

† *Drus. pra-
terit.
Godw. Mos. &
Aaron.*

* *Seld. Ux.
Heb.*

But what is chiefly to be considered is this; *viz.* That *This World* is as it were a *Nursery* for a *better*; which through God's Infinite Goodness is to be furnished with Inhabitants in great measure from *hence*, if they shall be found worthy of so great a Favour: And this is the chief end of our being born; without which a life here would be *very mean*, and hardly *worth living*. Surely then the greatest Designs, how glorious soever they may look, which reach no further than

than to Affairs here, are in reality much short of that which tends to the *sitting* our Children for Heaven: And I may say *sitting* them, in the mean time, for *Earth* too, by their being instructed in all those Virtues which shall render them worthy of Esteem and Love. And I hope their Number will be thought so far from hindring this design, that it will rather much commend it, in that it makes it the *greater*, and consequently of *greater Worth*. This is an Undertaking, the good effects of which shall last, when those of others (tho of great Prudence and high Account) will be forgotten: And its Reward shall then chiefly be given, when the Rewards of other things shall dye with us. And how glorious a Sight will it be, to see in Heaven a good Father encompassed with a fair number of those who were once his Children; to whom his virtuous and religious *bringing up*, hath been highly instrumental for the *bringing them thither*; and where with mutual rejoicings in one another, they increase one another's Happiness? So worthy a work was the instilling of wholesome Precepts thought to be, even among those that were not Christian, that the † *Satyrist* could not forbear wishing, That the Earth might lye easy and light upon the *Ancients*, and *Flowers* and a perpetual Spring adorn their *Urns*, who esteemed a good Instructor as another Father. What Honour then is due to him who is *Both*; and not more a Father by Nature, than a Master by Precepts and Counsel? He who

who amidst such Considerations shall account God's making even the Poor's Family like a Flock, to be an Hindrance, not a Blessing; and will not own them, when round about the Table, to be like Olive Branches, deserves that there should be in his house a Miscarrying Womb, and Dry Breasts, as a Punishment to him; and that the Undertakings which he is thus (above others) at leisure for, should themselves prove abortive; or have none to inherit the Honour of them after him, if successful.

And here, Sir, could I be heard by all those Families abroad, wherein are Many Brethren, and all One Man's Sons, I would give them this Counsel, That as they are a Number, so they would not be † merely a

Number; as if born for no other end but to eat and drink. And as they are Ma

† Nos Numerus sumus, & fruges consumere Nati. Horat. Epist. 2. l. 1.

ny in Number, so they would be One in Affections; acting (in just Enterprizes) as much as may be, with a conjoin'd strength; helping among themselves those that are more slow, but constant; and confirming those that are less sure, but quick; hereby living a Confutation of that Contumely which is laid upon their Number.

We said they were as Arrows; and these (as * Scilurus told his Eighty Sons)

when separated may easily be broken, but when tied close together, no force can stir them. This Brotherly and Active Temper is that which Nature requires of them, which their
their

* Apud Plut.

their *Parents* earnestly command and expect, and which all good men would much rejoice at, it affording a grateful Entertainment to all around them; since it is a good and pleasant thing for Brethren thus to dwell together in Unity.

ever good Designs and Commendable Actions fail amongst them, it is not because they are Numerous, but because their Number is as it were

† *Concordia
res parvæ
crescunt, Dis-
cordia maxima
dilabuntur. Sa-
luti.*

broken; the Breach for † want of Affections being no less destructive than that by Death; but such an over and above brings *Disreputation* and *Reproach*, which the other is wholly free from.

A Second Thing against a Numerous Offspring is, That a Free and Generous Way of Living is thereby maim'd and cut short.

I must needs own, Sir, That where Many Children are to be bred up, an Estate in its being laid out, is to look towards them, which otherwise we might use wholly in *Hospitality* at the Table, *Charity* at the Door; *Religious Actions* towards Sacred Persons or Things, and *Generous Deeds* abroad, wherever occasion shall make room for them: For he that hath none his Heir, may if he please be his own *Executor*, and divide his *Patrimony* betwixt Heaven and Earth: I mean, to Uses Sacred and Civil.

But tho this be truly commendable, (and the more so, because so rarely done; insomuch that we with Praises with *Eternal Blessings* on his Head

Head that doth it), yet I cannot tell but Religious and Prudent Education of Children is altogether as well-pleasing unto God; and consequently (for from *Him* we are to take the *true Worth* of things) to be no less well esteem'd of by discreet and considering men: For why should Hospitality to Strangers be preferr'd before the Care of a man's own Family? And why open-handedness abroad, before a provident laying up at home? The *former* hath indeed more of *Pomp*, and makes a *better Figure*, but the *latter* no less of *Virtue* and *Intrinsic Excellence*. So that a Free and Generous Way of Living is so far from being maim'd and cut short by a Numerous Issue, that it *willingly* puts off in good measure its own Gaiety, and yields to a Virtue not *less* in its self, but in the *present Circumstances more necessary*. Not but that still it is to be exercis'd, yet with *more Caution*, and some *Restraint*; that it may allow room for Natural Affection, enobled with Religious Consideration; and be it self not the *less Hospitable*, by admitting *other Virtues to sit* (if I may so speak) *at Table together with it*. Yea, it grows *prudent for it self*, in yielding Provision to those who shall live to exercise Generosity and Munificence in the following Age; which in a single Person might spend themselves so much now, as after some years to be nothing at all.

And even these Persons with whom I now argue, will acknowledge what I say to be just. For when any one lives extremely Generous,
and

and hath the Name of Hospitable and Liberal among those of the first Rank; if when he dies he leaves his Children so meanly provided for, that their Education cannot be creditably carried on and maintain'd, *These* will be apt to say, That he should have lived *Wisely* rather than *Splendidly*; That it would have been better his *Offspring* should have spoken forth his *Care* and *Kindness* after his *Death*, than *Men of little Relation to him* his *Freeness* only in his *Life*. And may be too, they'll speak of Children and their bringing up, with more kindness and fervor, and give them more the Precedence, even to a well-regulated Greatness, where no Issue is, than in modesty we could desire they should.

But then, Sir, How *Mean* is that *Free* and *Generous Way of Living*, which is by some accounted such? Which consists chiefly in the seeking after Pleasures, and the Luxurious Provisions for them; and seems then to have attain'd the chief end, when it doth not so much entertain, as effeminate and imbrute men. What if Children will not allow the spending of so much time in the Park or Play-house; the going so rich in Cloaths; the Gaming so high; the keeping so great a Train of Attendants; and the being never free from the Visits of many, who are rather *only known*, (if so) than *known* to be *Friends*? One of Prudence, tho he had no Children, would not esteem these things to be so essential to a free way of living, as that it could be no such thing without them. Yea, possibly

possibly he would account even real Chains and Fettersto be not greater hindrances of true Liberty and a Generous Converse, than *These* are. Why then should many Children be said to cut short that Freedom of living which a wise man with only few or none, would not *desire*? Nay, would studiously *avoid*, as a greater Burthen than all the Cares of a Numerous Family come to. Compare, Sir, the one and the other; a large Number of Children (in their usual Circumstances) and this free and generous way of living, (as it is called) and say whether is rather to be chosen. To what account will it arise, so many years irregularly gone, and hardly one day truly lived? So great an Income spent, without so much as any Virtue administered to? So much Rich Attire worn, and it may be not one Poor Back cloathed? So many received at Table, who possibly remember it not to morrow, unless by the fruits of yesterdays Excess? But then on the other side, how well does it look, when days are spent in Industry, and nights in rest, and both keep their places, without the being one turn'd into the other? When what God hath given us is laid out to the ends for which he gave it; the exercise of Virtue, and the nourishing up of those who shall exercise it when we are gone? When by righteous methods an Estate is kept, increased, or gotten, and Children are bred up fit to inherit it? When nothing is seen within, that young, yet observing, years can learn ill from; but

but from the whole management of things have a fair foundation laid of a virtuous course of life? I need not doubt, Sir, whether of these two will be the more approved of by you, but will venture with some assurance to add this, That tho an Estate may many ways be laudably employed, yet it cannot any way be more advantageously used for the designs of God and Nature (which are the chief in all things) than in the right educating of Children; which is a contributing as much as in us lies, to God's preserving and well-governing the world; without which it would go into disorder and confusion.

But why, Sir, should a Numerous Offspring be set in opposition to a free and hospitable way of living? To do the Parents of such Right, I can with truth say, that I never have found more Hospitality with *any*, than I have with *these*, according to the different Qualities they have had: With those of *better Rank*, Tables richly furnished, and a most free Reception: With those of a *Middle Station*, that which a Friend would chiefly desire, *viz.* Plentiful Entertainment, without Ostentation, and an hearty Welcome. And methinks their very number of Children may sometimes also seem to contribute both to the being Hospitable and Charitable: The *daily Provision* for *so many* can usually well allow a room for a Friend; and the Tables Fragments, and Off-cast Garments, afford Food and Cloathing for the Hungry and Naked.

Nay,

Nay, it hath been a pertinent Observation, how much some Families full of Children, near unto those which have had none, (as if in several places they were set *on purpose* for the Comparison) have much outgone them in a free and creditable way of living, when there hath been an equal or greater Income to the fewer. Among the *Fruitful* hath been Openness and truly good Neighbourhood; God Almighty unaccountably blessing them according to their Number: Among the *other*, a closeness and unhospitable Temper; and this not to the Increase of Wealth, as if God had caused them to put their Gettings into a bag with holes. Or if they have tortured Riches, and by an untoward force held them whether they would or no, there was this *vanity* and *evil disease* going along with them, that God gave not the owners power to eat thereof.

Neither, where are large Progenies, is there only a free and generous Tenor of Life, but sometimes also, *such extraordinary Beneficence*, as obliges Posterity no less than the present Generation. One Instance, as being fresh in our memory, because done in our Age, and not exceeded by any, if not exceeding all of the same kind in it, I cannot forbear to mention, *viz.* That Lasting and Noble Charity of Thomas Foley, Esquire; who in the midst of many Heirs descended from himself, (for he had in all Fourteen Children, the greater part of whom were then alive, besides Grandchildren born of some of those) had that Largeness of Heart as amply

ply to Found and Endow an Hospital, where *Sixty Poor Boys* are continually maintain'd, fitted for, and then set forth to Callings, in which they may themselves honestly live, and be useful to Society. A Deed so religious and great, that by it he hath in a short time affix'd a more true Honour to his Name and Family, than a long Series of Titles for many years backwards, could have transmitted to them; and hath also set an Example which will hardly be imitated by any of those who have very great Estates, and but few or none of their own to inherit them.

Notwithstanding what hath been said, I must confess, that sometimes where a Numerous Issue is, and the Income good, there is not that free and hospitable living: But then let us see that we lay the fault where we ought to do. This is not to be attributed to the *Number of Children*, but to the *Covetousness of the Parent*; which would have been the same thing, had he had none to provide for. And this is often sufficiently seen, in that he as little deserves well of his

Children, as he doth of *others*: For † every thing else shall cost him more than those shall; insomuch that when at last he *leaves* what he can no longer keep, his Sons as little

† *Res nulla
minoris con-
stabit Patri
quàm Filius.*
Jur. Sat. 7.

know how to use his Inheritance, as himself while living knew how to enjoy it.

So that, Sir, I leave you to judge, whether the Second Objection against Many Children, may

may be truly urged, or not. I cannot but plead for them ; and had I them here, I would not let them go without this Friendly Word, That whereas a good Father upon the score of well-educating and providing for them, hath not (as we may well suppose he hath not) enjoy'd many of those Pleasures, nor used those Liberties which otherwise he lawfully might, and, it may be thought, would have done; they would through a kind sense of these Favours make some recompence for those denials of himself, by giving him all the delight they can, in an obedient and every-way pleasing behaviour. I am sure they cannot but do it, if they be ingenuous; and such I trust they are whom I thus both plead for and admonish. Or if upon the account of their Father's doing truly his Duty towards them, God hath strangely blest'd him, with ability of living liberally, and thereby given him Credit and Friends; then let them, by answering all the promising hopes he hath had of them, add to and increase these his Blessings to the utmost of their power; but by no means through an unindustrious, vicious, or irreverent Carriage, in any respect fully or diminish them. And what greater pleasure can there be to good Children, than as it were to join with Heaven in the increasing the Happiness of a Father, who is thus rewarded chiefly for his deserving so well of them?

The Third Thing is this ; viz. An Uneasiness still sitting upon Parents, from their being solicitous for Many.

The same Objection is made against the Sacred Name of Friendship, by some of those who pester'd every thing by their Subtilties. They say,

Cicero de Amicit.
cit.

' That *This*, in great measure, is to be avoided, lest it should be necessary for One Man to be solicitous for More.

' That the foundation of an happy life is the being void of Care ; which the Mind cannot be, if One must still, as it were, with labour bring forth for Many.

Si tanquam
parturiat Unus
pro Pluribus.

This may indeed be no less urged against Children : For the Throes of Mothers seem not to be at an end as soon as the Birth is over ; but they still are in pain for those they have brought forth, that it may be well with them ; and the Fathers partake likewise in this Travel. And truly it is some Credit for a plenteous Offspring to have that Argument urged against Them, which at the same time is urged against one of the best and most pleasant things that Mankind enjoys.

But in answer to it all, I say ; What if there be as great Solicitousness where there is but One or Two, as where there are Many Children ? Nay, What if a yet greater, by far, be shewn where there is no Child at all ? and this upon the very account that there is none at all. This is not seldom seen ; and therefore the Objection loseth much of its force, whilst it may be brought

brought against *One* or *None*, as well as against *Many*.

But we will grant, That where there is a greater Number of Children, there *will* be a Solicitousness: Yet since those that are so very apt to make this Objection, were not bred up without Cares themselves, and mankind is in a state that needs them, it is no less than a due debt lying upon them, that they should exercise some Cares towards others; and the denying this to every one would be a great piece of Injustice. Were it that they were (as the Ancients fabled the first men to have been) born of some

† *Big-bellied Oak*; or were

like Mr. *Hobbs's Sticklers*,

ally'd to no one in the world,

there might be some shew of Reason why they should *not* be *solicitous for any*. But as the world from the first hath gone, and still goes, and so likewise must do, to be wholly unconcern'd for others welfare, is highly unequitable. And surely our Cares may then seem to be most *appositely* bestow'd, when we *educate* those who are *related* to us, as we our selves have been *educated* and *related* unto others.

† — rupto robore
nati, Compositique luto
nullos habuere parentes.
Juv. Sat. 6.

There are some whose soft and delicate Tem-
pers please themselves with the conceits of a
kind of Golden Age, and could wish that all
things for use and delight might grow up to
their hands, and flow in upon them without any
of their *Care* or *Pains*. But, Sir, it is by no

means fit, that a man should be *altogether void of Care*. Should he be born into the world merely to take his Pastime in it; to Dress and Complement; to have all his Hours taken up betwixt the Comb and Glass, and the Couch and Table; to be led by Fancy, and not by Reason; and

Ad strepitum Citharæ cessatum ducere curam. Hor. Epist.

then only to shew a Concernedness, when Musick, and Balls, and Treats are at an end; and to be at that time no otherwise concern'd, than how to have the same renewed, and brought over again; the Noble Endowments of a man would serve for very mean ends, and such as are altogether unworthy of him. If any will be *wholly void of Care*, it must be after this *unmanly sort* with him; for not only the *having Many Children*, but also all *those things* that are good and useful, must have

† Τῆς δ' ἀρετῆς ἰδέω-
τα θεοὶ μεγάλους ἐθνή-
κων Ἀθάνατος. Hesiod.
Εργ. καὶ ἡμέραι.

—Pater ipse colendi
Haud facilem esse viam
voluit, —

—Curis atuens mor-
talia Corda.

Virg. Georg. 1. 1.

Gen. 3. 19.

some Concern and Trouble accompanying them; for † God hath order'd it so to be. Did we know such a one who had all things according to his desires, and in the midst of them was no way careful for the Welfare of any, we would, I dare say, be contented that he should be the last of his Race: And however his outside might be trim and gawdy, and we our selves so civil as to give him some outward Respect, yet

yet we could not but inwardly have very low and contemptible thoughts of him.

Nay, as it is very *unfit* that a man should be altogether without Cares, so I cannot tell whether, when he takes the Paths which seem at the greatest distance from Cares, he *can* be wholly without them. I have known some who have had little to do with any one, and not well known what to do with themselves, to be as uneasy and restless as those who have had the weight of large Families lying upon them. Even small things, where greater are not, will find the way to create trouble; and Cares, as well as Nature, tho you seem to turn them with violence out of doors, will yet return. Yea, I dare say, that the *discreet Solicitousness* which some honest Parents have for their Children, is exceeded by that *extravagant one* which some have even for a *Dress*, or for some *small Designs*, which the mere absence of more Manly Cares hath given birth unto. So that in truth the Cares that grow from a great many Children, do only prevent those that would arise from meaner things; and do themselves put on a true worth, by being employed about more noble Objects. And (what is of very great moment in the present case) that Solicitousness which is engaged towards

Naturam expellas fur-
câ, tamen usque recur-
ret. *Hor. Epist. 10. lib. 1.*

Malunt turbare Rem-
pub. quàm Crinem. *Sen.*

—Taurea punit
Continuo flexi crimen,
facinusque capilli,
Juv. Sat. 6.

Children, carries refreshments along with it, in that it follows the Dictates of Nature, and is on the side of Right Reason: For whom *should* a man, or whom *would* he be careful for, rather than for those who are born of him? Not to mention, that the over-much Fondness and Solitude that is usually shewn towards an Only Child, is corrected where there is a great Number, and turn'd into a Rational Care for the rightly bringing of them up; whereby they are made Useful Members in the Community.

I know that the *Solicitousness* for Many Children may sometimes grow into an *Anxiety*: But then it is no less subject to excess in other things like-wise, and so is a fault on either hand to be mended; which it well may be, especially in the present case; since such Arguments against

immoderate Carefulness are afforded in Sacred Writ, as can no where else be found. And tho Distrust be laid to the *Heathens* Charge,

Psal. 23.

Matth. 6. 25.

Verse 32.

and we are thereupon the more cautioned to

Permites ipsis expendere
re Numinibus quid
Conveniat nobis, rebusq;
sit utile nostris, &c.
Charior est illis Homo,
quam Sibi.

Juv. Sat. 10.

avoid it; yet he among them spake divinely, who said, That we may with Calmness and Assurance trust our Concerns with God; since Men are more dear to *Him*, than they are

to *Themselves*.

And (if it may be look'd upon as some little Instance of a pleasing Contentment amidst Ma-
ny

ny Children) I could tell you, Sir, where from the Testimonies of the Parents themselves, there was not only the greatest freedom from inordinate Cares, but the greatest accession of Joy also, when they went to the House of God, and saw their *Five Sons* following them, with every one a *Sister* in their hand. It was matter of their enlarged Praises to God, that they could in such a perfect Number attend upon him in his Publick Service: And the Spectacle was so pleasing to the *Great Congregation*, that many could not refrain from making Prayers for God's Blessing upon them all. And, Sir, when the same thing shall be done by *your greater*, and equal *Number* of either Sex; as it will be, I doubt not, to your self and good Consort, a matter of much Joy, so (allow me to speak it) *Florence* is not a fitter Sight for an Holy-Day, than *These of Yours* will be.

Those, I am sure, may well be admonish'd, for whom great Cares are undergone, that they approve themselves not unworthy of them. As they are a great Number, a *kind Solicitousness* is not more than is *meet to be shewn* towards them; but if they shall not be as good as they are *many*, it is more than will be deserved by them. They who as they are Children, render the Carefulness of Parents to be rational and creditable, should by no means cause it in any respect to be sorrowful and grievous. Ill Morals, and want of Duty, will quickly make it to be so; which they are earnestly besought not to contribute to;

By those Pains their Mothers underwent for them so many Months before they were born, and at their Birth : (Or if these were from Necessity, and not from Love to them) By those Yearnings towards them when they were little, and unable to help themselves : By that continued Watchfulness which preserved them from Fire and Water, and a Thousand more Dangers they were liable unto : By those many careful Provisions which were made for their Education : By that Anxiousness in placing them out into the world, and that daily fearfulness of their any-way miscarrying : By those pleasing Hopes which are conceiv'd of their well doing ; and those earnest Prayers which are constantly put up for their good in every respect : How ill will it look, if after all these Expressions of uninterrupted Cares and Solicitousness, there shall be nothing rightly to answer them ; or only that which shall the worst way do it ? If there be any good Blood in Children, it will both rise into a Blush, should they any way have failed in what was their part to do ; and also will stir them up to make undelay'd and suitable returns ; especially since, however the Solitude and Cares of Parents may have been very excessive, and thereby a great Fault, and at the same time a great Punishment to them, they yet are very strong Obligations to Children, and such as should influence their whole lives to gratefulness and a true care of themselves.

But

But let us go to the Fourth Thing, *viz.* The Afflictions that arise from Some, who in all probability among so Many, will not prove well.

And indeed, this is often too true; there being Instances daily of the Grief of Parents, from the Miscarriage of their Children: And this their Grief is the greater, in that they are touch'd (if I may so speak) in the tenderest part of their Souls; nothing being more *near* them, or rather *so much themselves*, as their Children are. Nay further, there is a greater Excess of Sorrow, when after all the hopes, even from Infancy, of what Comforts they should reap from them when grown up, (and those their Hopes are usually very large, as arising from that over-great Opinion which Parents are apt to conceive of their own) they are surpriz'd with the contrary to their expectations, and see themselves of a sudden miserably deceived.

But certainly the Number of their Children is not to be blamed for this. And herein we are a little obliged to the common repute (tho in it self vain) which makes the *Seventh Place* in the Number of Sons to give the Privilege of an *Healing Virtue* and *Fortunateness*: But no Number, or Place in Number, hath ever, so far as I know, been thought ill to any Children.

The Reasons then of Childrens proving ill, are to be sought elsewhere: And they will be found to be lodg'd oftentimes more in
others

others than in *themselves*; the Parents having too much an hand in their own Affliction.

Not to mention how injurious they may be to their Offspring, by indulging in themselves *Vicious Inclinations* of what sort soever; and rendering them habitual, when as yet they are only in the way of being Fathers. The *Features* of their *Body* are not so surely resembled in Issue,

as the † *Ill Qualities* of the *Mind*, when they have been suffered to go uncontroul'd. I remember *Philo* in his Embassy, represents *Cains Caligula* boasting of himself,

† Similem tibi se non
Corpore tantum
Nec vultu dederit, Mo-
rum quoque filius.

Juv. Sat. 14.

That from his Ancestors being *inured to Dominion*, he, while he was in his *Mother's Womb*, and before he was brought into the world, was instructed in the *Art of Governing*. It may more truly be said of some who spring from an Immoral and Debauched Stock, that they are in the very derivation of their Being disposed for

the * *Excesses* of Taverns, the Dissoluteness of Stews, or whatever else may be termed *proving ill*. For tho no natural Temper is so unhappily bad, but that it may

* Φίλοινοι καὶ μεθυτικοὶ
γίνεσθαι φιλοῦσιν ὧν ἂν ᾖ
ἀρχὴν τὸ σπινθερὶς οἱ πα-
τέρες ἐν μέθῃ ποιησάμε-
νοι τύχῃσι. Plut. περὶ
Παιδ. ἀγωγ.

be subdued by a Constancy of Care, and the Grace of God; yet the evil Habits of Parents do oftentimes cast so strong an *Influence* on the *Make* and *Inward Composure* of Children, that there will in them be need of more obstinate Resistan-

ces

ces than men are usually willing to exercise, or than the Power and Skill of their Fathers are able to excite and keep up in them, tho they should afterwards to the utmost endeavour to do it.

Sometimes the Education of their Children is careless and loose. The suffering their Tongues to be first season'd with unseemly words, and taking pleasure themselves in hearing them; the stirring up of Passions, and encouraging them to the little Revenges they are capable of, is in my opinion an early foundation to what will afterwards be worse. When Childhood is wearing off, they will be careless of them at home, lay the Grounds of Religion very slightly, if at all; and possibly set them an Ill Example in their own practice; which carries too sure an Influence unto, and in a manner † au horizes them in their proving ill.

Sometimes the fault shall lye chiefly in a too great Fondness and Indulgence: They'll use their Children to an evil Tenderness, * forming their Palate before their Tongue, and accustoming them to Delicacies both of Cloaths and Food; insomuch that they shall need all that can be left them. And perchance their Softness shall be closed

† — velocius & citius nos
Corrumpunt vitiorum
Exempla domestica
magnis
Cum subeant animos
authoribus.

Juv. Sat. 14.

* Quid non adultus
concupiscit, qui in pur-
puris repit? nondum
prima verba exprimit,
jam Coccum intelligit;
jam Conchylium poscit.
Antè palatum eorum
quam os instituimus, &c.
Quintil. Institut. l. 1.

with

with by the weak Father, against all the Methods of Discipline which are used for the altering them. So that afterwards *Manly Actions* will not agree with their *Constitution*. They cannot bear the *Hardship* of being strenuous and industrious: And their *Infant Tendernefs* by a kind of necessity improves into an *adult* one, accompanied with all those Vices that are fuitable to it. Or should their *Constitution* be more *strong* than their Education hath been good, yet if their Father (as *Adonijah's*, 1 Kings 1. 6.) *hath not at any time displeased them*, in saying, *Why have ye done so?* no wonder if they at length *displease* their Father to purpose, and even seize his Estate before his head be laid.

And while I am taking notice of *Ill Education*, as being a chief Cause of Childrens proving ill, if I may give an Example the other way, worthy to be imitated, it shall be that noble one of *Mary the Wife of Alexander Duke of Parma*, mentioned by *Strada, de Bello Belg. Dec. 1 lib. 4.* After he had given an account of her incessant Prayers and Fastings for her Husband, during his being in the Wars, he adds, *Liberos vero, quod intelligeret singulari à Deo Benignitate concessos, præcipuo Studio, &c.* But her Children, because she knew them to be vouchsafed her by the singular Favour of God, she most carefully while she lived, endeavoured to season with Divine Instructions: and afterwards when she was near her Death, she committed nothing to the Duke her Husband with a greater accuracy as to
Par-

Particularities, than their Education: Using to God those words which she had read Queen *Blanch*, the Mother of *Lewis* the Saint, had used before her; 'I now in this my last hour pray and beseech thee who art the Father of all, that if my Children shall be about to commit any grievous Sin against thee, thou by hastning their Death, wouldst prevent such Offence against thy Divine Majesty. A Wish (saith the Historian) worthy such Princely Mothers, who would not those should be their Sons, that would not own God the great King of the world to be their Father. Were there such pious Care and Earnestness shewn usually in the bringing up of Children; and were that Care and Earnestness seconded with uncessant Prayers to God that *they might live before him*, and have his Grace and Blessing, fewer would prove ill than now there do. Those upon whom so much Religious Pains, so many Prayers and Tears have been laid out, cannot likely miscarry.

Sometimes where there is not a Carelessness or Over-fondness, there may be *Imprudence* little less dangerous than those. And this hath been often seen as in some other things, so especially (let me say it) in letting the Concerns of their *Last Will* be known before their time; which hath been of very ill consequence in nourishing Animosities between Children, and Distastes towards the Parents themselves; which increase with Time, and are a peculiar Affliction to *Them*, and a great Uneasiness and Disquiet to the whole Family.

Now

Now why should not the Carelessness, Bad Example, Fondness, and Imprudence of Parents be taxed for the ill proving of Children, rather than their Numerousness? Or why should any on this account plead against a greater Number, and not against Children as such? Since these things I have been mentioning tend to the making *Fewer* to be an Affliction, as well as *More*; and Fondness and Indulgence is in an especial manner the Danger of *One alone*. This I am sure of, That were Parents more careful and prudent in the bringing up their Children, this Objection against a Numerous Issue, from some of their proving ill, would much lose of its force.

But yet it must necessarily be acknowledged, when Parents have used all the Care and Prudence they possibly can, have called in the advice and endeavours of Friends, and have also by earnest Prayers sought aid from Heaven for the well-doing of their Children, they have found all too little to engage them to that Diligence, Sobriety, and Obedience, which above all earthly things they have desired. The many Temptations and Allurements of the Age; the Subtilties of loose Companions, and the too Pliant Temper of Youth to Vicious Courses, when those Courses offer Pleasure and Ease, do oftentimes too surely betray, engage, and hold fast *green and unconfirmed Years*.

However, Sir, tho it thus be, yet why this should make more against Many Children, than Fewer,

Fewer, or One, I cannot see. These *latter* are as much in danger as the *former*; and if any of These prove ill, how is the Affliction the less? But *These*, you'll say, may escape, while the *Other* are taken: And we may reply, 'Tis possible These may be taken, while the *Other* escape. But 'tis more probable, that One or More of the Many may fail: Yea, but if *One* of *Two* fails, then *Half* is gone; if an *Only Son*, then *All*. But more of the Many may go awry: 'Tis true; but then more of them may prove well. As there is more likelihood in Many, of Trouble from *Some*, so there is greater probability of Comfort from *Others*. Add to this, that the Grief from an *Only Child*, if he miscarry, is by so much the greater, because he is a *Jewel*, and the *Whole of the Treasure*: And since commonly the Love to *Him* is equal to the Love that is shewn to *Many*, the Affliction must strike as deep as that from the others would, should they *All* be drawn aside: But that they should *All* be thus drawn, is not so likely. The like may be said in proportion to *more* than *One*, i. e. a *Few*; and therefore the Advantage is on the side of the *Many*; and the more, because their Number takes off the Assurances of great Incomes, (which the other in likelihood may have) and so may engage them in that Industry for their living in the world, which those other are the less concern'd for, as not having so much need of it.

There

There are other Afflictions besides those of not proving well by disorderly Carriage, which may come in to the Objection, as Deaths, Deformities, want of Capacities, and such like, which very nearly affect the hearts of Parents: But a less numbred Issue is subject to them as well as a greater; and so the laying them chiefly to the charge of the latter is not fair.

All that I shall say is this: When any of these Afflictions are rather the *Disposals of Providence*, than the effects of *Faults* in Parents, and fall upon such as have endeavour'd not to be wanting in their Duty to their Children, let them be born with *Patience* and *Submission*. The suffering the Pleasures of all other Blessings to be wholly taken away by the Grief for a Child that proves amiss, cannot be consistent with Innocence. There is no man but hath his Afflictions *some way or other*; and God sees it good that *Some*, even *Good Fathers*, should have theirs in *This* manner. They are indeed of the *severer sort*; and we might wish they were the Lot alone of careless and imprudent Parents, that deserve them, (as indeed they most often are.) But it is the Happiness of a Christian, that whatever his Trouble is, it may, unless it be his own fault, be for his good: And he may so far comfort himself, That God is a more loving Father to good men, than they can be to their Children; and so even this Affliction, how bitter soever it is, may be laid upon him as to the *Issue* and *Event*, out of *Paternal Care* and *Love*. However,

ever, sure I am, nothing can be more true, than that the *disrespecting a man* for the *Afflictions* that proceed from his *Number of Children*, is a most *ill-natur'd* and *inhumane part*; and an highly absurd one, to do it *merely* for his *Number*, where there is visibly no *Affliction* from them.

I cannot leave this Head neither, without Counsel to those whose Cause I defend; *viz.* That they would obviate this Objection by an unceasing Carefulness that no Grief arise to their Parents from any fault of theirs. It is possible that a large Number may both in its self, and from every particular in it, give no cause of Grief to those from whom they sprung: And I could instance where it hath been so, and where they all have proved well, and thrived happily in the world. What *hath* been, why *may* it not *still be*? And tho it hath been *less frequently*, yet why may it not, with due care, be *more often*? Methinks I would have a Plenteous Offspring to look upon themselves as a *Strong Party* against all *Immorality*, and any *thing else* (in their power to prevent) that may bring *Sorrow* to their Parents; and by an *united Force* to keep them off. This they can do; and what is so well-becoming them, and will speak forth such a Resolute and Excellent Spirit in them all, let nothing either force or warp them from it. But if there hath been Trouble created by some of them, either from Faults that *might* have been remedied, or from Unhappiness that *could* not, those that are free, should by an Excess (if possible) of Duty

on their part, make up the Defect on the part of others. * *Affliction* usually carries great *Oratory* along with it, and works oftentimes even upon strangers and unknown persons. And shall it the less do so upon *Children*, where the endeared Titles of Father and Mother call strongly also upon them to remove it, in the way I speak of? Their most affectionate and dutiful Deportment will not indeed wholly take away the *Affliction*, but it will set a Joy close by it, through which it will be less difficult to be born. And I would be the more urgent with them upon this account, that if my *Arguments* cannot prevail, at least my *Earnestness* may.

The Fifth and last thing is this; *viz.* A man's Name sinking into *Meanness*, by reason that where there are many Children, there is no likelihood that a *Plentiful Provision* should be made for them all.

Indeed our desires of being well-spoken of, and esteem'd in Life, and of being remembred not to our disadvantage after Death, are naturally planted in us, and are a great Spur to laudable Actions. But perchance He had arrived to no mean part of Perfection, and did deserve Praise for it too, who said, 'Could he do his Duty as he ought, and thereby be well-pleasing unto God, he could absolutely be content it should never be remembred that such a one as He had lived in the world. If a man shall affect to have a Name other-

otherwise than (while he doth his Duty) God is pleased to order he shall have; it shews he is not worthy the name he affecteth, and is unskillful in the important difference between a *great* and a *good* Name: This latter, tho not reaching so wide, nor spoke so loud, being yet such as a Religious man would much rather chuse than the other. It is not his fault he hath such a Numerous Issue; but he looks upon it as the Favour of God to him; saying with *Jacob*, *The children that thou hast graciously given thy servant.* *Gen. 33. 5.* And he will do by them the best he can, endeavouring to make them truly *his* who gave them, whatever Circumstances as to Estate he leaves them in. If he shall not after Death be talk'd of in his Childrens Greatness, he will yet take care not to have an *ill remembrance* amidst their Meanness, through any fault of *his* or *theirs*.

It is indeed an indispensable Duty for a Father to endeavour to make his Children *good*, but that he should make them *great*, we find no where commanded. This latter men are usually too intent upon of themselves, and need no Instigations to it. But when all is done, it may truly be said, that the *Piety* and *Charity* of Parents, and that *Virtue* and *Industry* they have possess'd their Children with, are an *Inheritance* much surpassing a *great Estate*: And they are not meanly or discreditably left, who have *These* their Patrimony; for *These* will intail God's Blessing upon them; and are those *Ingredients* also of a *good*

Prov. 22. 1.
Eccl. 7. 1.

Name, which make it rather to be chosen than great Riches, and better than precious ointment.

But, Sir, it is most certainly so, that where there hath been abundantly enough for many Sons, the Name hath yet sunk (all Circumstances considered) as much as where Children have laboured under meaner Provisions. The Example is very high, but no less pertinent, in the vast Dominions of *Charles the Great*, which, if ever any could, might be thought sufficient to have advantageously kept up his Name in his Posterity: Yet his immediate Grandchildren, the Sons of *Ludovicus Pius*, too forward to make themselves all Kings, first deposed their Father, then divided his Territories (or rather tore them) among themselves; which passing after a while into such Families as were Enemies to the Crown of *France*, made the *Carolovinian Line* less considerable both at home and abroad: There being no question to be made (says mine

* *Heyl. Cosm.*

* Author) but *Lewis the Stammerer*, *Charles the Bald*, the *Gross*, the

Simple, would otherwise have found better Titles. So unsure a Foundation of a Great Name in Posterity, is a large provision for them.

I know it may be said, That the fault was here not in the *Provision*, but in the *Number*. Tho perhaps also it will not be denied, that the Provision being too great, might contribute to its own fall, through its own weight. And indeed, where an Estate is beyond all measure

'too big for any one Family, besides the *Natural*
'*Inconveniences*, which like *inaigested Humours* in
'an *over-bulky Body* tend to the *weakning* of it,
'Divine Providence may be concern'd to give
'stop to its growth, and out of Justice bring it
'lower; especially when it hath grown such by
'the Injury of others.

But to answer both these together. We will
suppose there shall be but *few Children*, and the
Estate not *excessively great*, (tho so great, that
more in reason can hardly be desired) yet it is
not always for the lasting Credit of a man to
have left such Provision to such Children. For
it is possible (and truly not uncommonly seen)
that *Few*, or but *Two Brothers*, may fall out even
about what is thus left them; and may find the
Estate great enough too for the affording Power
to undo one the other: Or the Estate may in a
more silent manner make haste to moulder
away; and then he who got and left it, is as much
censured in the decrease either of these ways,
as he had thought to be prais'd in the Continu-
ance of it.

Sometimes Childrens being richly left, tho
thereby they might seem placed most advantage-
ously for virtuous Actions, and above the trou-
bles that others suffer, hath been the occasion of
greater Follies, Vices, and Miseries, than what
usually fall upon inferior men: For Riches and
an Estate are of themselves *indifferent to contrary*
Operations, to good or ill, to joy or sorrow: And
they do not more defend and advantage some,

than they expose and betray others. Some that have been endued with Natural Abilities both of Body and Mind for a *Virtuous Life*, of the *higher sort*, and in their Temper have shewed no *aversion*, but an *aptness* rather thereunto, have fallen from it for no reason so visible, as because they have had Estates, which have afforded them *Pleasures* and *Flatterers*. Nor have many found them less instrumental to more than ordinary *Troubles*; especially those of the *Weaker Sex*, who have hereby been too frequently made a *Prey* to ill men: Insomuch that more than a few, from the grievous Discontents and Miseries which their larger Fortunes have brought upon them, and bound them all their lives unto, have deliberately, and not in a *Passion*, wish'd that their Lot had been of the meaner sort; and that (if it had pleased God) they themselves had been of the number of those whose daily Bread is earn'd by their daily labour. And great Credit no doubt it is for the deceased Father to be remembred either from the *Extravagancies* or the *Sorrows* which his Estate hath betray'd his Children unto.

But it will be said, That a plentiful Provision may be, and often is, much for the Welfare of Children, and highly conducive to the Name of a Family; both of which a Numerous Offspring forbids.

That a plentiful Provision may be for Childrens Welfare, and a Family's Name, I grant; but that a Numerous Offspring thus forbids both, I deny.

For

For I am sure it sometimes doth not ; God so blessing the discreet Father's Care, that all are plentifully provided for, and the man's Reputation too, much better secured from his prudent laying up a *Competency* for so Many, than if he had heap'd a great *Estate* upon One alone.

Nay, sometimes where great Honour hath been attain'd unto, a great many Children have been so far from diminishing such Honour, that they have very much multiplied and increased it. There cannot be given a more convincing Proof of this, than in the Family of the Honourable *Richard Boyle*, who being at first only a Private Gentleman, and a Younger Brother, from a Father that was also a Younger Brother, arose to be the first Earl of *Cork*. He had by his Virtuous Consort (the Daughter of Sir *John Fenton*) Five Sons and Eight Daughters : Four of his Sons he lived to see Lords and Peers of the Realm of *Ireland*, and a Fifth was greater than those, *viz.* the Honourable *Robert Boyle* ; whose Name alone is equal to a very large Encomium. Six of his Daughters were married to Earls and Lords, and himself had the Happiness of being made a Grandfather by the youngest of them. How much Reputation and Honour had this Noble Person not been adorned with, if he had had none, or only a few Children ? Nay, as if his other Blessings had learn'd to increase from the Increases of his Offspring, his Income and Wealth came into the account in

* Countess of
Warwick's Fy-
neral Sermon.

that great Character which is * gi-
ven of him ; ' That he raised such
' an Honour and Estate, and left such
' a Family, as never any Subject of
' the Three Kingdoms had done. And lest any
thing should seem to detract from God's Favour
to Him and his Numerous Issue, and to lay his
great Fortunes on somewhat else, his Integrity
in his Rise and Growths was so eminent and
uncorrupt, that the most invidious Scrutiny
could not find wherewith to tax him of any Ir-
regular Methods, but he *still rose*, and *still was*
innocent.

After this remarkable Instance, there is ano-
ther that may not, Sir, be pass'd by, because it
seems to offer it self, as not being far from us ;
viz. in the Plenteous Issue of Sir John Corbet, of
Stoak, Baronet, by Anne his Wife ; which were
an Equal Number of Both Sexes, and no fewer
than Ten of each. Of the Sons indeed Two on-
ly married, the Eldest and the Ninth ; the for-
mer advantageously, as it became the Heir ; the
latter not less honourably than if himself had been
he : But every one of the Ten Daughters were
match'd, Some into Honourable Families, and
All into Worthy ones. Their own Family de-
servedly glories in them, as throwing back Ho-
nours upon it by their Marriage, not unanswer-
able to what they drew from it by their Birth.

And where there hath been only a Competen-
cy left for a great many, but yet a very Good
Name thereby obtain'd by the careful and pru-
dent

dent Parents, one or more of such Children have not seldom risen to such Estate and Honour, as their Family all the while it was fewer was unacquainted with. I might (amongst many others) fetch an Instance from a most excellent Person (whose Name yet my great Respect will not suffer me to mention, this Paper not being worthy of it) who having been one of Seventeen Children, (Sixteen of whom grew up to be Men and Women, *viz.* Four Daughters and Twelve Sons, and lived all very creditably in the world) hath had the Honour to *refuse* a Bishoprick, and is now a Benefactor that may stand equal to a Founder; whose Name will live so long as good Learning shall flourish in his College, or holy Devotions be offered up in his Chappel. Another Brother of the same Seventeen (Sir B. B.) by his large Acquisitions as to Estate (which possibly place him among those of the very first Rank) hath given good cause for what hath in a pleasant manner been sometimes said, (with allusion to his Name) That he hath a *Benjamin's Portion*. I may cheerfully say it, and yet speak a Truth, That where some men cannot themselves reach to the *obtaining* or *increasing* of a Name or Estate, it is perhaps none of the *least sure* and *efficacious* means to *beget Many Children for the doing of either*.

And how know we but those from whom the Number began and went on to be *termed great* (for he must be born after several, who first occasions

cassions it to be termed so) may in due time prove the greatest Comforts? tho the other may be no mean ones. If the Eldest

Gen. 49. 3.

with *Reuben* be the *Beginning of Strength*, those of a latter Birth may be the *Completion* of it. Of the Eight Sons of *Jesse* in Sacred Writ, the *Youngest*, we read, was a *Crowned Head*. And tho this is an Example so rare, that it stands as it were alone, perchance in the many Ages since not to be parallell'd, yet it is sufficient if it ordinarily be so far answered, (as it not seldom is) that the Younger shall become the greatest Scholars, or the Richest Traders; and from their Industry shall also make the Elder ones look better to themselves, than otherwise probably they would have done. And the very thoughts that so it may be, may make such as you, Sir, still bid the Increases of your Families very welcome into the world.

But whether the Beginning, Middle, or Latter End of a large Progeny shall afford the more *Reputable* and *Wealthy* ones; and the rest (as it may seem) shall chiefly from their Number be in meaner Circumstances; yet there are in the world more than *That Proculus* whom the *Ly-*

rick Poet sings of *, that nourish in themselves the *Tenderness* and *Care* of *Fathers* towards their *Brethren*, and that will partake of the same long-liv'd Fame with him on that account. And certainly it is a great

* Vivet extento Proculus ævo
Notus in Fratres animi
Paternali, &c.

L. 2. Od. 2.

great Expression of *Religion*, and will not fail of a Reward in *this world* (for all will highly esteem and speak well of it) as when they are *Converted*, so likewise when they are *rich and able*, to *strengthen their Brethren*.

And what is not to be forgotten, the Pious Industry and Endeavour for the educating of *Many Children*, is so pleasant and acceptable to *good men*, that they are willing where honest Parents seem to be straitned by their Number, to *lend an hand to them* when opportunity serves. And in those Publick Encouragements which the Piety and Munificence of former Ages have left, they who were part of a Numerous Issue, if in Merits not *unequal to others*, have frequently in that they were *part of such Issue*, been preferred before them. Which hath been an *occasional Charity* rightly suited to a *standing Benefaction*; and in great measure hath shewed the following Generations to be not unworthy the good deeds of their Ancestors, since they have so advantageously dispensed them.

Sometimes where the Children that are *Many* are not well-provided for, and the Credit of their Family is thereby lessened, it is from the *Parents* or the *Childrens own fault*, and so by no means to be laid to the Charge of their Number.

The *Parents* themselves are *faulty*, and destroy their own future Reputation, by *an enjoying it too much* in their *life time*. They will live great, make a large Figure, and follow the mad guise of the world, even beyond their Abilities; and
so

so their *Vanity* being greater than their *Natural Affection*, the Welfare of their Children, and their own Name too is sacrificed to it.

The *Children* sometimes deserve the blame; when preferring their own *unsettled Fancies* before the Prudence and sage Advice of others, they affect Callings unsuitable to their Capacities, or Parents Abilities: And so, *if not gratified*, grow careless or stubborn; which is never the way to Credit or Wealth: If *yielded to*, they find themselves after some time unequal to their state of life, and so fall into Contempt and Want. Or when after a prudent (as their Parents and themselves thought) and agreeable Disposal in the world, they grow weary of what they ere-while liked; and throwing off the Provisions but now made for them, expose themselves naked, on presumption of *Second Cares* towards them; which either cannot be at all, or must be much more low and disadvantageous than the former. Or when all along they shall be averse to *any Calling*, and let Cares and Business alone to those that like them. A thing which (I speak it not with disrespect) the *Younger Sons* of Gentlemen are too often not commendable in; who look upon the Studies of Arts and Sciences, and the managing of Trades, which yield a fair Livelihood and Reputation to others, to be *below them*: And so they bring themselves into mean and depending Circumstances, which are much more unwor-
thy

thy their Family. But yet hereby they rank themselves with good Company, the Younger Sons of *German Nobility*, who out of a like imprudent Sense of Honour are willing to continue Poor. But *Italy* in this affords a better Example; where while the Eldest are well-provided for by Paternal Inheritances, the Younger Brothers are so wise, as by Learning and Experience to seek for Dignity and Maintenance from the Church: A thing which some of our own have tried of late with good Success, and do thereby stand upon equal ground with even the best Heads of their Family: Neither is it looked upon as a degrading of their Honour to be thus exalted.

Sometimes, I must confess, a Plenteous Issue may with Innocence in such *low Circumstances* be provided for, that Reputation shall be *small*; yet so as to terminate not in *Discredit* properly, and *Reproach*, but in *Quietness* rather, and *Silence*. But then the man in such a case may seem to have much more cause to rejoice in the contented and peaceable Estate of his Posterity, than to be troubled for his want of a Name in them. It is much better surely to *live happily*, than to be *talk'd of highly*; and to be *useful to a few*, than to be *known to many*. If the Numerousness of Issue insensibly places them out of the Noise and Tumult of the world, gives them the *sweet life of labouring*, and being content with *what they have*, makes them to be *Deceivers* *

*Nec vixit
malè qui na-
tus moriensq;
fœellit. Hor.
Epist. l. i. 17.

vers* only in this, that they in their lower Fortunes are really the happiest men, while others in higher ones are *thought* so to be; it is such a sinking of a Name as is to be wish'd for. Nay, I cannot tell but the greatest *Reputation* attends such a condition: For those who knew how to *praise best*, and *best knew also* how to *chuse* their *Subjects*, have pitch'd upon and described this as the *Happiest State of Life*. Infomuch that tho the persons who are in it, lye hid as it were from the *Gazers* of the world, and leave great *Titles* to *others* who are delighted therein, yet they have a *delicate Character* spread over them, which they all share in, and which *Those* in *highest* Places will with *Pleasure* read, while *These* do *inwardly* perceive, and in *Privacy* enjoy it.

It is not otherwise, Sir, with *Families*, than it is even with *Kingdoms*; which indeed are only greater Families. These are not always the most happy when they have wide Bounds, superfluities of Wealth, and great Fame: For 'tis possible they may have more to do to maintain the largeness of all these, than the Benefits arising from them all come to. But they are then more rightly termed happy, when a Spirit of Industry runs through them; and Righteousness and other Virtues proper to Society, shall nourish Peace and Concord *within*, and give no occasions for Disgusts and Wars without. Thus those Families likewise are not

unhappily provided for, nor will the Fathers thereof be number'd with the uncreditable, when those that are sprung from them are insured to a sedulous and provident care, for the preserving, increasing, and enjoying the Competency they have; when they are taught to help each other, and to injure none of their Fellows; and from their being every way well managed in their narrower Circumstances, shall draw an agreeable Pattern of managing *their own*, and thereby of continuing happy when they shall themselves be Fathers. The Mediocrity of these gives them that Quiet and Content which the Abundance that others have, is a stranger to; and they have Health and Ease at a light Expence, which great Estates are often not great enough to procure. 'Tis true, they have not that mighty piece of Happiness, the being *fam'd far and wide*: But then, tho they be not like great Rivers, that are allow'd a Place in Maps, yet as lesser Brooks, they have a Name in the Neighbourhood, and render themselves useful and beneficial in the Places where they are.

But it is indeed sometimes so, that a Numerous Offspring is left altogether unprovided for, and expos'd as it were to the wide world, where yet there is nothing to be faulted either in Parents or in Children. But then God's Providence, which *cloatheth the flowers*, and *feedeth the fowls*, very often provideth signally for *them who are much better than*

Mat. 6. 26, 28.

Prov. 21. 1.

than those. He who hath the hearts of kings in his hand, hath the hearts of all other men no less, and can secretly, yet surely incline some Great Person, or some Relation, or some Friend, or it may be some Stranger, to give them Favour and Protection; or in ways that we cannot think of, can provide for them. It is his Property, when

Psal. 27. 10.

Father and Mother forsake their Children, (i. e. either through want of Affection will not, or through want of Power cannot stand them in any stead) then to take them up himself, and make them his Care. And the Instances are not few, how he hath exalted the Children of Poor Parents for their great Diligence and Attainments in Divinity, Law, Maritime Arts, Military Conduct, and such like, to very considerable Stations both Ecclesiastical and Civil. Surely he who thus mercifully protects them, and orders things so remarkably for their good, doth thereby affix a better Name upon them (and upon their Parents too) than large layings up for them otherwise would have done. And the sinking of a Name into Meanness by reason of a Numerous Issue sometimes left in low Circumstances, is very ill urged, when the Almighty so far favours such, as to stile himself the Helper, yea, Father of the Fatherless; that is, of those who are unprovided for, and have none to take care of them.

Psal. 10. 14.
& 68. 5.

I might here take notice how Providence hath *strangely asserted* the Credit of unusual and *excessive Fruitfulness*, against the Censures and Reproaches that have been cast upon it; and hath also *remarkably preserved* the Numbers which some Parents either from Distrust or Shame have endeavour'd secretly to make away. One Story (instead of many) shall serve for both. And because it shall not lose any thing of its Credibility for want of a good Voucher, you shall have it as I find it related

† Heylin's Col-
mog. in Germ.

in a very † good Author. *Isen-berdus* Earl of *Altorffe* in *Schwaben*, had to Wife one *Jermintrudes*, who accused one of her Neighbour-women of Adultery, and had her grievously punished, because she had not long before been deliver'd of Twelve Children at a Birth. It fortun'd afterward that she her self, the Earl her Husband being abroad in the fields, was deliver'd likewise at one Birth of Twelve Children, all Males. She fearing the like Infamous Punishment which by her instigation had been inflicted on the former Woman, commanded the Nurse to kill Eleven of them. The Nurse going to execute the Will of her Mistress, was met by her Lord then returning homeward: He demanded what she carried in her lap: She answered, *Whelps*: He desired to see them: She denied him: The Earl on this growing angry, opened her Apron, and there found Eleven of his own Sons, pretty sweet Babes, and of most

'promising Countenances: Examining the mat-
 'ter, he found out the truth, enjoined the old
 'Trot to be secret, and put the Children to a
 'Miller to be nurs'd. Six years being pass'd
 'over in silence, the Earl making a solemn Feast,
 'invited most of his Wife's and his own Kin-
 'dred. Attiring the young Boys all alike, he
 'presented them to their Mother, who suspect-
 'ing by the Number of them what the matter
 'was, confess'd her Offence, is pardon'd by the
 'good Earl, and carefully educateth her Chil-
 'dren; whom the Father commanded to be
 'called by the name of *Guelps*, alluding to the
 'Whelps, or Puppies, which the Nurse told him
 'she had in her Apron. From the Eldest of
 'these *Guelphs* or *Guelps* (that you may see in
 'their Preservation they were *not ill provided*
 'for) descended Henry Son and Heir to *Luit-*
 'gardis Queen of the *Franks* and *Bivarians*;
 'whose Posterity, after they had held *Bavaria*
 'more than an hundred years, became Dukes of
 'Saxony, &c.

One thing more I cannot here but observe;
viz. That a Numerous Offspring, notwithstand-
 ing those *Cares* and *Troubles* that attend it, and
 those *Faults* too that are found with it, will yet,
 in that it is such, give a Reputation to those
 whose it is: Insomuch that on the *Supulchral*
Monuments of some, who in other respects were
 very Creditable, it hath been thought worthy to
 be made a *Lasting Memorial* of them to future
 Ages. Let it not be thought superfluous to in-
 stance

stance in what the Gravestone of *Nicholas Hooks* of *Conway* in *Caernarvenshire*, Gentleman, bears; viz. That he was the *One and Fortieth* Child of his Father *William Hooks*, Esquire, by *Alice* his Wife; and the Father of *Twenty seven Children* himself. And likewise in the Monumental Inscription which is in the Church of *Melpersham* in *Wiltshire*, thus;

In Memoriam Isaaci Self & *Margaretæ*, Parentum, *Jacobus Self Filius* hoc posuit.

Qui postquam Nonagesimum secundum Aetatis annum compleverat, Numerosâ Sobole felix; viz. Quatuor Filiis & Tredecim Filiabus, unâ cum Nepotibus Nepotumque Prole, ad Numerum 83, mandatâ Creatori Animâ, lubens de Vita migravit, Feb. 1. An. Dom. 1656.

To the Memory of *Isaac Self* and *Margaret*, his Parents, *Jacob* their Son erected this.

Who when he had lived to the Age of *Ninety two* years, being happy in a *Numerous Offspring*, viz. *Four Sons* and *Thirteen Daughters*, with *Grandchildren* and their Issue, to the Number of *83*, willingly yielding up his Soul to his Creator, departed this Life, *Feb. 1. 1656.*

More yet remarkable is that extraordinary Increase of *Robert Honeywood*, of *Charing* in the

County of *Kent*, Esquire, and *Mary* his Wife, (her who was famous for being cured of Despair as to her Salvation by the not breaking of a *Venice Glass*) there having been Three hundred sixty seven Persons which lawfully sprung from them within less than the space of Fourscore Years. The Remembrance of which the Tomb of one or more of that Family is honoured with. And though it be not on a Marble Monument (which yet it deserves) yet in the best Records the Parish hath, is the Memory preserved of the Numerous Family of Mr. *Richard Fairfax* of *Barford* in the County of *Warwick*. Not that his immediate Children were so many; but with *Himself* he could number in the *same House Four Descents*, all at once alive. So that whereas others do usually count their *single Children* in order as they were born, This is my Eldest Son, and so onwards; he might reckon thus, This is my *Eldest Generation*; my *Second* This; That my *Third*; and all these in so perfect a manner, that the Father, Grandfather, and Great-Grandfather, were all *conjugal*ly pair'd, and not one of them twice married; all living most lovingly together, in very good Credit and Plenty. The thing being in all its Circumstances perhaps not any where to be match'd, the late Reverend Rector of the Place, Mr. *Thomas Dugard*, was so affected with it, as to put it into this Epigram; which you, I dare say, will not blame, if it be subjoin'd here.

Quartus in Ætheriam Fairfaxius editur auram,
 Patris, Avi, Proavi, gaudia Magna sui.
 Hos tegit, Una Domus, cum terna Uxore Maritos ;
 Unaque alit lautis Mensa benigna cibis.
 Non magis unanimes nôrunt hac Secula Mentis ;
 Est bis corporibus Mens velut una tribus.
 Totque ex Conjugibus bis Vinc' la jugalia nemo
 Nexuit ; & nemo nexa soluta cupit.
 More Columbarum letatur conjuge conjux ;
 Deseruit rugas nec juvenilis amor.
 Hisce tribus Paribus Barfordia jure superbit ;
 Nam par his Paribus quis locus alter habet ?

Englified by the Reverend Dr. Ford, thus :

Fourth *Fairfax*, who on Earth's Stage now ap-
 pears,
 Sire, Grandfire, and Great Grandfire jointly
 cheers.
 These Three one House doth lodge, one Table
 feed ;
 And each his Partner hath at Board and Bed.
 So closely all in mutual Love conjoin'd,
 Th' whole Six seem acted by one single Mind.
 And none e'er had or wish'd, on either Side,
 A Second Husband, or a Second Bride.
 But Turtle-like, preserv'd their Loves Chaste
 Flame,
 From smooth-fac'd Youth to wrinkled Age the
 same.
 In Three such Pairs boast, *Barford*, till there be
 A Place for Three like Pairs found like to Thee.

Idoubt I have heap'd up too many Instances already ; and yet there is one more that claims a place almost whether I will or no, as exceeding in Number all hitherto taken notice of ; and upon that account obtaining an eminent place among Mr. Fuller's Worthies in *Buckinghamshire*, I give it you as it is there : *Dame Hester Temple*, Daughter to *Miles Sandys*, Esquire, was born at *Latmos* in this County, Married to Sir *Thomas Temple* of *Stow*, Baronet : He had *Four Sons* and *Five Daughters*, which lived to be married ; and so exceedingly multiplied, that *this Lady* saw *Seven hundred* extracted from her Body. Reader, I speak within compass, and have left my self a Reserve ; having bought the Truth hereof by a Wager I lost. Besides, there was a *New Generation* of *Marriageable Females* just at her Death : So that this *Aged Vine* may be said to wither even when it had many *Young Boughs* ready to knit. She died *Anno 1656*.

These things are taken notice of not merely as they are *rare* and *uncommon*, but as they are an *expression* of God's *more than ordinary Blessing*. And if a *long Descent* be esteemed so great an Honour, as we every where see it is, why should not a *broad one* be esteemed the like ? especially since *This* seems a fair Foundation of the *other*. It is not thus in such Offspring as is *Spurious*, and ariseth the *wrong way* ; for who ever desired *This* to be registred as his Praise ? Should such continue in an *unbroken Succession*, it yet would carry an *inseparable Stain* along with it ;
and

and shew that of Solomon to be eminently true,
*A wound and dishonour shall he get; and
 his reproach shall not be wiped away.* Prov. 6. 33.

But *this* Multiplication of a man often falls to the ground, and is seen but a while; as it is observed by Mr. Camden, in Dorsetshire, of Sir Thomas Poiner, otherwise a Martial man, but a fruitful Father of *much base Brood*; which, saith he, *with him* soon vanish'd away, as *bastardly slips* seldom take deep root.

And now, if from what hath been said in relation to the *sinking of a Name*, we shall consider either *Him* who from a
 † *Barren Wife* enjoys the † Jucundum & charum
 Caresses and Presents of his sterilis facit uxor amicum.
 expecting Friends; or *Him* Juu. Sat. 5.
 who according to his own

desire, hath no more it may be than one young
 * *Aneas*, and one *fair little Daughter* playing in his Hall, in whom he * Sat. 5.

wishes to live in the next Age; *He* who is the Father of a Plenteous Issue, will be found to have the Preference of them both. For the one when he seriously weighs things, is *dejected* in that he *hath* none to continue his Name when he is dead: The *other*, so oft as any Distemper seizeth his Dearlings, is in great fears he *may have* none to continue *his*, there not being any to succeed them, in case they fail: Whilst the Name of the *Fruitful Person* is several ways secured; his Store of Children still supplying

* Uno à-
vulso non de-
scit alter.
Virg.

ing * the Defect, if any drop off, and Providence in a special manner engaging it self for them. And should it so fall out, that notwithstanding all, his Name should sink, (as sometimes 'tis confess'd it may) it must not be imputed to the Number of his Children, but to those Faults which 'tis probable he hath been guilty of; the ill effects of which he must thank himself for.

And since I have hitherto clos'd my Argument with some particular Expressions to the Number I am pleading for, they might take it ill should I forget them here. Let this then be my Precept to them; That they would not by Sloth or Negligence, or any other evil way, contribute to the sinking of their *Fathers Name*, or their *own*. The world allows *Means enough of living*, if not *splendidly*, yet *honestly*, and therefore not *discreditably*. If they have had Religious Parents, who have taken care to educate them in an honest Calling; and if they enjoy the *Heritage* of their *Virtues* and their *Prayers*, they are well provided for, and need not be troubled that they are not all *Elder Brothers*, or *Only Sons*. What is shared among many may have this *Miracle* wrought, That by their Industry and God's Blessing it shall not become *less* by being *divided*, but be as much after some time to *every Particular*, as it would have been to *One alone*. Yea, tho they should be left *poor* and *destitute*, and not know which way to turn them-

themselves, yet let them not despond. Low as they be, they are not *below the good Providence of God*; who unless it be their own fault, will give them Food and Raiment, perhaps *more*; and a good Report, if not a *greater Name*; and it may be *That* too: So plentiful is he in his Goodness; for he raiseth the poor out of the dust, and lifteth up the Beggar from the dunghill, to set them with Princes.

1 Sam. 2. 8.

And thus, Sir, I have answered what is commonly objected against a-Many Children: And perhaps I have said more than enough upon the Subject: But there are two things (I mentioned) not so commonly spoken of; which after the other, may ask a few words to them.

The former is, That where there is a Plenteous Issue, there are the *more brought into a miserable world*, and larger food is thereby afforded unto Death. Which things were look'd upon to be either so *ill in their Nature*, or so deplorable in their prospect, that they were thought a Plea strong enough for an *Abstinence* even from Marriage and Procreation of Children. However, tho Misery and Death were extravagantly made use of for such Abstinence, yet perchance they may be enough to cause a man in pity to wish that his Number may not be great.

And yet surely, if these things, as being the common condition of Mankind, may justly cause any to wish their Children may not be many, they may

may as justly cause them to wish they may be *none*: For why should Pity be so partial as to allow *any one* to be *born*, which will not allow more? Especially since in a smaller Number the Condition will not be the better: The *Natural* state of men being the same in *Few* as in *Many*. But let us a little consider the Objection.

I easily grant it to be a miserable world we live in. The Heathen spake very acutely, who said it was in the first place *best* for a man not to be *born*; in the next, best to dye quickly. And Job 5. 7. *Eliphaz* of old said very truly, *That man is born to trouble* [as naturally] *as the sparks fly upwards*. And we know whose use it was to weep at the Births, and rejoice at the Deaths of any amongst them: Yet for all this there may be a not undesirable Entertainment in the world for a Numerous Issue; for men are generally well enough pleas'd with their being here. Even good men are apt to be *too much taken* with the world; and those of the *worse sort* could wish their *lot might be for ever* in it. Such Provision God hath made not only for our Necessities, but Pleasures also and Delights, that the Stoick in *Cicero de Nat. Deor.* from the Consideration thereof could say, *Pro-nova nostra interdum Epicurea fuisse videatur*: Providence sometimes seems to favour the *Epicureans*. This I am sure of, that *Many*, perhaps the *greater number* of the troubles of the world have their rise from an *immoderate use* of the

the Pleasures in it; and a man's prudent and temperate Converse may prevent many of those Miseries which are so much complained of. So that if the World be no worse to a larger Flock of Children, than it is to others; and their Prudence and Temperance shall (as it is not impossible it may) be no less than theirs is, who know how to manage those things to their Welfare, which so many by their own fault convert to their own trouble, there will be no great reason to wish before hand that our Number may not be large; or if it be already so, to be troubled that so it is.

If the Almighty hath so order'd it, that Afflictions shall some way or other attend our mortal Condition; and shall commission also some beyond the common size, to fall upon here and there a particular person, it is, we may be sure, for right good ends: For some may need this as Discipline; and the Courage and Constancy of some others may be signalized thereby, which otherwise would not be remarkable. For (as the * *Moralist* saith) 'What would *Hercules* have been more * *Arian. Epic.* 'than another man, if there had not been a 'Lyon, an Hydra, a Wild Boar, and other 'Troubles to conflict with? And surely Afflictions improved into such Exercise and such Honour, may not seem such hard Conditions to Parents, in relation to a Numerous Issue.

Yet

Yet sometimes such may be the Discomposures of the World, as to some particular Countries or Places, that a man may not unreasonably wish (if God sees it good), That his Family may not further increase. There

was a *present Distress*, when the
1 Cor. 7. 26.

Apostle thought it seasonable Advice to his *Corinthians not to marry*. And our

Blessed Lord speaking of the sad Times that

should come, says, *Wo be to them that are with child, and give suck in those days*.
Mat. 24. 19.

The like may be said as to the present Case: The Pleasure in a Numerous Offspring would be small, where at the Will of a Tyrant they must of a sudden be thrust from their Native Soil, and exposed to wearisome and hopeless Travels, not knowing where to find Rest and Relief: Or where the Fury of War abounds, turning *Cities into desolate heaps*, and spreading Destruction over whole Countries. Though *Children are as Olive-branches round about the table*, yet where there is *no Table* for them to be *round about*; and where with

Hagar the miserable Parents, as
Gen. 21. 16.

having their Sustenance gone, sit *over-against the little ones afar off*, that they may *not see them dye*, there is large matter for Tears, but very small for Joy or Comfort. But, God be prais'd, though we know where it has been so with others, we our selves are yet free from these Evils; and, I trust, from our Providential Situation, we still shall be, unless by our
own

own Discontents and Divisions, and other Sins, we force those Miseries upon our selves, which *otherwise would not come.* But suppose the contrary; we yet may say thus much as to these Miseries, with many Children in the midst of them; *viz.* That where they are chiefly occasioned upon the account of our holy Religion, God doth either in his good Providence remarkably take care of such Children, giving them a Charitable Reception wherever they go; and therein making good the Promise of

an *hundred-fold of houses and brethren, with Persecution,* for those *Single Houses* and Brethren lost for his sake; or else he so orders it, that their Sufferings shall much turn to their Honour and Crown. Might

not the * *Maccabean Mother*, and her *Seven Sons*, be esteemed happy even amidst their Tortures?

Mark 10. 30.
* 2 Maccab. c. 7. & Joseph. de Martyrio Maccab.

How much greater were their Spirits, than all the Cruelties they underwent? Who is it would desire that she had had One Son fewer for the Rage of the Tyrant? Nay, I had almost said, Who is it can be so injurious to their Honour, as to wish that the Pains they suffered should have been one jot less than they were? Such Wishes would be kindnesses to *Meaner Souls*, but *Theirs were above them.*

Thus may it be in the *extraordinary Calamities* of the world: But *ordinarily*, and in the *common Troubles* of Life, it is far otherwise. If these *Maladies* relate to the Body, there are Herbs
and

and Medicines at hand for the Cure of them: If to the Soul, there are excellent Counsels and Considerations for the alleviating them. Inasmuch, that could a man before he is born see what a World he is to come into, and had a power to chuse whether he would make one in it or no, he need not be affrighted by the common state of mankind, in relation to Miseries, from having a place among them.

See we next whether the being *Food for Death* be such an Evil, as to make us wish the Number of our Children may not be great.

Indeed no Earthly Creature besides Man, seems to have any apprehensions of Death; and to Man Death appears so terrible, that the Thoughts of it when dwelt upon, do much abate the sweetness of his Enjoyments, and give him an uneasy Check when he goes on uncontroul'd in them. And when we consider that so many who are dear unto, and it may be, are born of us, must become Meat for Worms, it may fetch a Tear from our Eye, and a Sigh from our Breast. From the Inexorableness of Death, and her swallowing up *all things*, it was, that whereas of old the other gods had every one their Altar, to * Her (for amongst those she was numbered) there was none ever erect-

* Meursius de
Funere cap. 1.

ed, except one alone (which no reason can be given of) in the remotest part of the world. But yet I see not why, upon the account of their

their *thus feeding Death*, we should wish our Issue the *Fewer* : For there is so much time usually between the First of Life and the End of it, and so many excellent things may be done therein, that in respect of *Them*, the having a Being in the world may be more *desired*, than in respect of *Death be feared*. We see all things have a share in Death, as well as Man ; and yet we account it abundantly worth while to breed up Beasts and Birds, plant Trees, and even nurse up yearly Flowers for the great Benefit, Ornament, and Pleasure, which are afforded thereby ; and we say that Death is not so injurious, as Life in them is advantageous. And why should it not be so in our own Persons and Children, when Life is of a much greater Excellence in Men, than in those other Creatures ; and if rightly improved, may give such a Name, which Death shall have no Power over ?

Besides, however Death be usually thought of with no pleasure, yet it is no less *natural to Dye* than to be *Born*. And possibly we may as well plead against the first springing of Corn, that it will at length grow *white for Harvest* ; or the blooming of † Fruit, that when ripe it will fall, as against any man's being Born, that he will Dye. We see some, after a due Number of Years kindly lived, to go * cheerfully off

† Poma ex arboribus, si matura & cocta, decidunt ; sic vitam Senibus aufert Maturitas. Cicer. de Senect.

* Cedet uti conviva Satur. Horat.

the

the Stage: Not that they complain of Life, or are discontented at the Miseries of it, but

† Qui spatium vite
extremum inter Mune-
ra ponat Naturæ. *Juv.*
Sat. 10.

—Unum me surpite
Morti,
Diis etenim facile est.
Hor. Serm. 3. lib. 2.

that they esteem it a fit thing for them to † yield to Nature. He was justly reckon'd among the *Frantick*, who made it his daily Prayer, that he might for ever be exempted * from Death. And they may seem not to deserve a better Cen-

sure, who would have none be *born of them* in- to the World, because *those* that are *born* must at last dye.

I must confess this Argument from Death carries *then* the greatest Sharpness, when while the *Parents* are *alive*, the *Children* dye, and leave those with sorrow to close their eyes, who on the contrary, and in the course of Nature should have had *theirs* closed by *Them*. Antiquity hath recorded *Priamus* and *Hecuba*, as great Instances of Misery: The former, as beholding the greater part of Fifty Sons and Twelve Daughters, dying before him; the latter as living to see among them, Seventeen of her own, *all Dead*. And *Niobe's* excessive Grief (which ended in *Stupidity*) for the immature Deaths of Seven Sons and Seven Daughters (her whole Number) is sufficiently known. I might add other Instances of some, who in a Plenteous Issue have thought themselves so well secured, that Death could not frustrate their hopes, and yet have at last

Life, last seen themselves left as much alone, as ever but they had been before they were Fathers. Such Examples are indeed of the *rarer sort*; but *ordinarily*, and in the *usual course* of the world, who is there almost that hath a Numerous Offspring, but hath repeated occasions of shedding Tears at the early Deaths of some of them? The Satyrift accounts it one of the great Evils of † Old Age, which the Years that accomplish a large Issue, carry the Man well towards), viz. the seeing the Funerals of Children, and being in perpetual mourning for nearest Relations.

† Ut vigeant sensus animi, ducenda tamen sunt

Funera natorum, &c.
Perpetuo Mœrore, & nigra veste senescunt.

Juv. Sat. 101

And yet (in answer to this) hardly any Father is there who from the Deaths of his Children, would be content that *those his Children should never have been*. Either the *Innocence* that adorn'd them, or the *Virtues* that were in Bloom, or that were, it may be, at their full Growth, leave such a grateful sense upon him, that however he grieved at their Deaths, he yet is pleased that such have been born, and liv'd in the world. *Cornelia*, the Mother of the *Gracchi*, having lost Ten of Twelve Sons, and being bewail'd by some as to her hard Fate, forbade them to accuse Fortune on her account, which had honour'd her so far as to give her such Noble Youths to her Sons. Others highly esteem'd their Births, but the Mother their Funerals too. And the late Great Duke of

Sen. Consolat.
ad Helviam.

Ormond, (as I have heard a Right Reverend Prelate say) when the News was brought of the truly Noble and Valiant *Earl of Ossery's Death*; and some, while they lamented the very great Loss of him, seemed to pity the Aged Father, replied with a Generous Warmth, that *he would not change his Dead Son for any Living Son in the Kingdom*. So much doth the Remembrance of Life outweigh (what is so much complain'd of) *Death*; and this even with those who are the greatest Mourners from it.

Nor indeed can it be so truly said, that *We feed Death*, as that *Death feeds Us*, and ministers to the Nourishment of Life. Is it not from the Death of Herbs, and Fruits, and Fish, and Fowl, and Cattel, that we live? And if Death had no place in these things, where would be our Subsistence? Neither may Death, by at length taking us off, seem to deal so hardly by us as kindly by others, making room for them to live and act virtuously; which is so great a Privilege, that one or few Generations alone should not engross it, but in due time give place, that others may have the like Honour and Praise after them, which from the Narrowness of this World they cannot have with them.

But when all is said concerning Feeding Death, it is but *One Part* of us, and that the worse part too, that doth it: And this dreadful thing Death deals so fairly with us, that it takes only what of us is naturally Mortal, and lets alone that which is not; our Soul, I mean, which

which indeed is * chiefly the Man; and which is by Death freed, as it were, out of Prison, and delivered from the Burthen of the Flesh. Nay, what is more, these Bodies are so far from being Food for Death, and thereby consumed, that they are preserved by it rather, as in safe and † quiet Repositories; and will at last be given up again refin'd and glorious. Death takes them swoln by Dropsies, or parch'd by Fevers, or worn by Consumptions, or wither'd by Old Age; but it will restore them in perfect state, * never more subject to Mortality. Such a feeding of Death as *This*, may be so far from making us wish our Number *Few*, by reason of the common Fate which all must share in, that it may rather make us desire it may be *Many*, by reason of the Equitableness that Death carries with it, and the many Privileges which it gives. And take the whole together, viz. the Miseries of Life, and Death at the end of it, and a Numerous Issue may stand untouch'd by such an Argument as equally strikes at all Mankind, and all things else too, as well as *Them*; and so the greater Number will defend them.

* Mens cuiusque is est quisque. *Tul.*

† Job 17. 13.
Isa. 57. 2.

1 Cor. 15.
42, 53.

But however those who come into the world must dye; and the more there are born, the greater Sway Death may seem to have, yet in the begetting of Children there is a kind of an attempt for Immortality; which is so well at-

tain'd by a Succession of Generations, that still there come up *fresh Numbers* for *Life*; and maugre the Fatal *Scythe* and *Spade*, Mankind will grow upon *Death*, till at last *Life* shall get the better.

For the Time will come when
 1 Cor. 15. 51. the Inhabitants of the World shall be *changed*, but not *dye*. And truly I think there is hardly one, but either in Himself, or in his Issue, would willingly be found a part in that Number. For Men are not (as other Creatures) prompted merely by Nature's Instinct to a Continuance of their kind, but have over and above, something *within* that inclines them towards an Eternity in their Name and Memory.

There are two ways of transmitting a Name to Futurity; by *Children*, and by *Memorable Actions*: And it's then most advantageously done, when done by Both: But because *Brave Deeds* grow not on every Soil, and it is more easy to be privately honest, than publicly renown'd; an Offspring is to the most the chief means of living after they are dead: And truly however this way of Surviving may seem to fall much short of the other; insomuch that some Persons, famous in their Name and Attainments, have (as 'tis reported of *Joseph Scaliger*) chosen rather to be the last of the Family, than hazard their Glory in a Posterity that shall fall short of it; yet supposing a man were allow'd to be only in One of either of these ways remembered after Death, I cannot tell whether Children may not justly be preferr'd before the other. For he that
 dies

dies celebrated for some great Actions is at the utmost of his Atchievements, and cannot be more than he is: But he who having been no more than ordinarily taken notice of, dies encompassed with a Plenteous Progeny, may through It, and long Descendents from it, be instrumental to a greater number of worthy Deeds, than One alone is capable of in his single Person. And why may not Honour be reflected on Ancestors by the Noble Deeds of Posterity, as well as Posterity be graced by the Virtues of Ancestors? But tho there should in none of those who spring from a man, be any very eminent Performances, and only the Practice of such ordinary Virtues as make Society happy; yet a good quantity of such common Virtues in Many Generations, may by much outweigh the uncommon and Brave Actions of only One Man, and may also kindly preserve onwards the Name of Progenitors; while the greater Fame of one who long since was the last of his Family, may very much cool, and be rarely mentioned. Whence we may see that Many Children are so far from ministring unto Death, that they are an excellent Remedy against it, and give such a Life to a man in more Ages besides his own, as one who prudently affects not to be buried in Earth and Oblivion too, would desire to live. It is superfluous, tho not altogether impertinent, to add here a † Custom observed by some of the Tartars, of Marrying those their Chil-

† Job. Edwards Enquiries, &c.

dren after Death, who chanc'd to be *unmarried* while they *lived*: Which though it favours of as much Fondness in Temporals as the Baptizing and Communicating the Dead did in Spirituals, yet it well signifies, as a kind of *Wishing* that Death might be frustrated by the Increases of such their Children in another State, so likewise an esteeming of themselves *chiefly to Live* in the *Multiplications* of their *surviving Issue* here.

I must not here neither forget those whose Part I take. It is therefore my Counsel to them, that through Carelesness or Ingratitude they let not any of the Privileges and Blessings of Human Life fall to the ground not taken notice of, or undervalued: And that they make not to themselves any Miseries which may be reckoned rather to their *own fault*, than to the *condition* of *their Nature*: So will those that they cannot help be much fewer, and more easily born. And when they see any Afflictions coming towards or falling upon them, let them be received and undergone with such an excellent Spirit, as shall shew their Virtues to be far taller than their Miseries. Let them yield themselves a Sight worthy to have God and the Holy Angels Spectators: For such is a Brave Man combating with Troubles, and conquering by bearing them. So will they also give a just Cause to men to say, That the present Generation had fallen short of an Honour, if such Issue had not *been*, or had been *less* than it is.

And

And as for Death, let them manifest that they can bear it without grudging, as it is the common Lot of *all* men: That they acknowledge it not more terrible than useful in the world: That they *fear it not* in a good Cause; and that they can even *desire* it also as such, which by killing them puts an end to the Miseries of Life, and after a while makes them in Body as well as Soul *live more* than ever before they did. Yet while they are here, and their Father is yet alive, let them give him the Satisfaction of seeing that *He* shall not *dye* while *They live*, but shall have in *Them* a *lively Monument*, which shall *it self* remember him with Gratefulness, and cause his *Memory* with *others* still to flourish. And let them persuade themselves (for they truly may) that by Misery and Mortality they have one Privilege which even the Blessed in Heaven have not; *viz.* The testifying the Sincerity of their Love and Obedience even to Difficulties and Pains, and Death it self. And this, though it proceed from an Imperfection of State, is yet as acceptable to God as those expressions of Service which more Perfect Beings can give.

The *Other Thing* (I spake of) is This; to wit;

That since there are so many *Snares* and *Temptations* in the world, and the *Number of those* that are *good men* is very *small* in comparison of those that are otherwise; may not the *Fears* and *Probabilities* of so many being *miserable* in another world,

world, be a *sad Argument* against a *Numerous Issue* to Religious Parents? who are in doubt whether it would not be *better* that *such Issue* should never be at all, or should dye when as yet *secure in Infancy*, than be in *too sure danger of miscarrying*, as to a *Future State*.

This Objection is not thought of every where; and where it is, is less used to be *urg'd openly*, than commonly to give a *secret uneasiness* to those whose Piety engageth their Thoughts often towards another world. But it doth not therefore the less deserve to be spoken to.

The Snares indeed and Temptations of the world, and the large Numbers of those who shall not be happy in the next Life, are matter of sad and melancholy Consideration: Yet the Number of the Good is, we trust, not so small, as some in their *Severity* have thought it. It hath given me an inward Cheering, when I have read *Apoc. 7. 9.* of *a great multitude which no man could number, of all Nations, and Kindreds, and People, and Tongues, standing before the Throne and the Lamb, cloathed with white Robes, and Palms in their hands.* And there being *Twelve Gates*

into the *New Jerusalem* (which if it be not Heaven, must yet be granted in all respects a Type of it) is, we hope, a good Argument against those who would make even *One* to be *too much* for *Them* who are to enter therein.

But what is of moment in the present Case; is this; *viz.* That as to the state of a more or less

less Numerous Offspring in the other world, it will be *Wisdom*, and perhaps *Duty* too, not to be further solicitous about it, than so as to engage our selves to the greatest Care and Diligence in the educating them religiously. This indeed the thoughts of another Life may well prompt us to. But God's hiding the knowledge of mens particular State from us, (out of compassion, no doubt, to our frail condition here) may make us discard all anxiousness concerning it. We are endued with Affections that are easily stirred up; and when they are so, are oft beyond our power either to govern or well bear them; insomuch that I cannot tell whether even the certain knowledge of our Relations *being Happy* would be so agreeable to us in this world: I am sure the knowledg of their being *certainly miserable*, would be a grief not easy to be endured; and such as would call for more lamenting expressions than *O Absalom, my son, my son*. Besides, it would possibly affix Discredit upon us abroad, as being worse than those Capital Punishments which throw a Scandal on the whole Families of those that undergo them. God therefore in *Mercy* towards us doth so order it, that we shall have no *absolute Assurance* of those whom we most *rest in*; and *some Hope* for those whom yet we have *fears of*, reserving the full manifestation of these things till we come to *that State* where our Knowledge shall not be disturbed by Irregularities of Passion. In the mean time we are directed the more pleasant way,

way, in being commanded to be charitable; which hath no less respect to the dead than to the living; and we have reason to hope, That God who enjoyns *our Charity*, will not be wanting in his *own Mercy*.

I must confess that our Infant-Children (I speak of them as Christian) dying while such, may seem more secure than those do who dye in Riper Years, or Old Age: Innocence, as yet accompanied with no Actual Sin, giving us fewer fears than even Virtues do, with which there is a Mixture of many Failures. But yet we are not allow'd to wish that they may upon this score dye while they are Infants. For herein we are to follow the Ends of God and Nature, by whom Infants are design'd for the growing unto Men, and the being useful in their Generation; which they no way are in their Non-age; and the Event of things we must trust to the Wisdom and Goodness of God.

But tho Infants, when they dye such, are to our apprehension in a safe state, yet the Privileges of those who are grown up are much greater, whether as to *this*, or the *other world*.

They can *here* actually, and in their own Persons, be obedient to the most excellent Laws and Government of our Lord, can exercise many Virtues and Graces, and therein be exemplary unto others. They have the advantage of knowing and being assured, That Heaven is promis'd, and will be given as a reward to them that live Holy Lives: All which Infants, as such, are un-

uncapable of. And however Snares there be, and Temptations in the world, yet they will be hurt by none of them, unless themselves be in the fault, and do carelessly or wilfully run into them.

Should it be said, That all these Privileges are exceeded by the Sureness of Bliss, that the Death of Infants placeth them in: That it is much better to be exerting pure acts of Praise and Love in Heaven (for this we doubt not but Infants there do; Heaven being such only to enlarged Understandings, and rais'd and refin'd Affections) than be serving God imperfectly on earth; and more desirable to be in Happiness without knowing any thing of it beforehand, than to live here below till we know it indeed in some measure, but yet in the mean while are beset with so many dangers, that it may too much be fear'd we shall lose it: I would reply,

That to the Privileges which are to men in *this World*, above those of Infants while here, there is *this* also in *Heaven*; viz. That tho Infants dying such are *happy* there, yet those who live a longer Life here in the exercise of our Holy Religion, shall be *more happy*. There are doubtless Degrees of Glory in Heaven, according to the Degrees of being Virtuous on Earth. And he who with Valour and Constancy hath fought against his Spiritual Enemies, shall have a much weightier Crown, than he who as yet hath been below the making an Assault. And
though

though these our Enemies are many and strong, and their Stratagems are every where laid for our Overthrow, yet we may go on with Resolution and Cheerfulness too, if we look to the Infinite Rewards that are held out unto us, in case we overcome; and overcome we certainly may, by Divine Assistance; which never is denied to faithful endeavours; and

2 Kings 6. 16. (to use the Prophet's words) *They that be with us are more than they that be with them.* So that all things being rightly considered, it may very truly be said, that it is not better to dye in Infancy, than to live in so many dangers afterwards of miscarrying.

And if it be not better to dye in Infancy, where there is good assurance of Safety, then certainly it *cannot be thought better to be prevented by the having no Being at all*, that so the dangers may be avoided as to a Future State: For *Non-Being* is not capable of any good.

I will take leave of those for whom I have hitherto argued, and whose Welfare I heartily wish, when I have added this one word; *viz.*

Whereas their affectionate Parents are above all things in the world solicitous for their Eternal Welfare, and find their Spirits sink so oft as they fear lest any of those whose Being they have been instrumental to, whom they have carefully nurs'd up, and who are extremely dear to them, should in another world be miserable: Let these by a Carriage full of Innocence, and Virtuous
Sweet-

Sweetness (such as shall favour of Heaven before-hand) displace such fears, and plant the most chearful hopes in the room of them. It is a great kindness (even where it is most Duty) for any one to be much concerned for the *well-doing* of These, and their being *Happy*; and it should at least have *this Requital*, viz. their Endeavours for the attaining unto Both. And when they can be grateful to their best Friends (for such their Parents are) by being good to themselves, methinks it should the more kindly prevail upon them so to be. And this I would the more earnestly urge, as to every one in particular for himself, so mutually for each other, and the whole Flock; there being none of them but what is to be, I say not only his *Brother's*, but his *Brethrens Keeper* in this respect. Even the damn'd Rich Man was anxiously desirous that none of his *five Brethren might come into that place of Torment*. And it would be a very great Reproach, if there should be more Carefulness from a Brother in Hell to his Brotherhood on Earth, for the avoiding Misery in the next world, than from Brothers here to the rest of their Number.

Luke 16. 27,
28.

But, Sir, I imagine you may jocularly say, That the things which I have urged may prevail possibly upon *some*; but to *You* and *Tours*, to whom they are written, they are of *small account*; your self being a *Clergy-man*, and the *Children*

Children of such lying generally under the imputation of not proving well, because they are Ministers Children.

Should such a thing be said by you, I dare say it would be jocularly said; unless as you are concern'd that such an uncharitable Censure should be entertain'd by so many: For to say truth, it is so widely spread, that it may almost be reckoned among those that are vulgar Errors.

If the Children of others do amiss, it is look'd upon as an effect of their Parents Negligence, or as their own fault: But when These go awry, or are otherwise unfortunate, there is somewhat else understood to be in it; as if God did not so much favour Them, as he usually doth the Issue of other men. It is an unhappiness that mens eyes are fix'd upon these with an expectation of their miscarrying; and when any thing falls out the worse way, with an interpreting it to their being *born of such Parents*. And if those of the Clergy were as apt to admit of such an opinion concerning their Children, as some others are, their Care in educating them would be much damp't; it being a vain thing to hope for good success there, where Heaven is deem'd averse. But thanks be to God the Censure falls upon those who have eyesight sufficient to see through and despise it, and whose Piety will deserve better things. However, were it so as some men think, yet the Quantity or Number of their Children is not to be reprehended so much

much as the Quality, or their being the Offspring of Clergy-men.

But to shew that those of the Clergy may have as good hopes of their Children as such ; and consequently as much reason for encouragement from a great number as any others may, I will briefly enquire into the *Ground* of the Censure concerning such Children ; and manifest how *vain* it is. I will likewise shew, how *falsely* their proving worse than others is laid to their Charge ; and also what reason there is that they should rather *prove better* than others.

As to the *Ground* of this Censure, I cannot perceive that it is any thing else than the *Clergy's marrying*. We know that Celibacy is esteemed absolutely necessary to Priests in the *Romish* Church, as being (for so they give out) a more *Pure State* : And this our Nation being once under that Communion, all the Clergy were bound to the same thing : But in the Reformation it being allowed to Ministers to marry, as not being any where forbidden in Sacred Scripture, those of the Church of *Rome* object it as an Impurity in our Clergy ; and so the Children begotten in such Marriage must, forsooth, have a mark of God's Displeasure upon them on that account : And the common People, who, to say truth, have generally no kindness for *Romish* Superstition, do yet unawares close with it, in retaining a Censure which owes its Birth wholly thereunto.

But

But surely under the Priesthood of old, where the greatest outward significations of Purity were enjoyn'd, Marriage was never esteem'd such an Impure State. The High-Priest was indeed limited to a *Virgin*, as a greater expression of Cleanness; (for a *widow, or divorc'd woman, or prophane, or an harlot, he was not to take*, Lev. 21. 14.) but Marriage as such, was not accounted a Condition unbecoming Sacerdotal Purity. Under the Gospel, Marriage is termed *honourable in all*, and the *bed undefiled*: And why that which is honourable and undefiled in all persons from God, should be esteem'd impure to any, I see not: Especially by those of the Church of *Rome*, who exalt it so high as to be a *Sacrament* in the Laity. To make it so *eminently holy* in the *People*, as to be a *Sacrament*, and so very *vile* in the *Clergy*, as to be worse than Fornication, is a *Mystery* not easy to be understood; or rather an *Absurdity* very open to every one's view. In the purest and first times it was not thought unworthy of those on whom the Sacred Function lay. *St. Paul* pleads it as his *Privilege*, to *lead about a sister, a wife, as well as the other Apostles, as the brethren of the Lord, and Cephas*, 1 Cor. 9. 5. And *forbidding to marry* is one of those ill things which is ascribed to them who in the *latter times* shall depart from the faith, 1 Tim. 4. 3. In the *Nicene Council*, when a *New Law* was about to be made, That those who were married before they had taken on them Holy Orders, should

should leave their Wives, *Paphnutius*, a most Pious Bishop, * with vehemence opposed it ; crying, An heavy Yoke was not to be imposed upon them ; urging that of the Apostle, but now mentioned, *Marriage is honourable in all* ; and giving to Mariage in the Clergy the name of Chastity. It was indeed term'd there a Tradition, That those who became Priests before Marriage, should not marry after. But it is not unreasonable to think, that the Distresses of Christianity, and St. Paul's advice thereupon, *1 Cor. 7.* were at first the cause of not marrying after Holy Orders ; they being willing to have as little hindrance as might be, amidst those Conflicts they were so often exposed to. But though Celibacy, which Persecution at first did thus occasion, grew by degrees so inordinately into esteem afterwards, that it was not left *free to be taken up or refused*, but was *imposed*, yet the Councils permitting those that were married while Laicks, to retain their Wives under the Sacred Function, shew'd that Marriage to Ecclesiasticks was not thought in its own nature to be unlawful ; for what was absolutely so, could not justly have been allowed to any.

'Tis certain that many of the Ancients had too high and exalted thoughts of Celibacy, and too low and mean ones of Wedlock ; there having been hardly so much as one of them who have written of Virginity (which as it

H

imports

* Socr. Hist.
Eccles. lib. 1.
cap. 8. Sozom.
l. 1. c. 22.

imports Singleness and Purity of Life, may respect either Sex) but hath condemned the contrary state, or at least spoken very undervaluingly of it. They are the words of *Dyd. Alexand.* *That tho the use of Marriage be permitted in the world, yet it is called Sin in comparison of Virginity* And those of *Cyrl. Hieros.* in his *Catecheticks*, (which the *Roman Doctors* will have to be genuinely his) are not less extravagant; *That if the Virgin Mary was so much honoured for carrying Jesus Christ the space of Nine Months, we ought yet more to honour Christians for keeping their Virginity many years.* This, viz. Celibacy, was extolled as a Virtue that came from Heaven, and at present rank'd those that embraced it, among Celestial Beings; whilst Marriage was look'd upon to be such as was rather * yielded to the world for a Remedy against Incontinence, than ordain'd for the Preservation of Mankind; and would have been † too gross for the Increase of Men in the state of Innocence. Among such thoughts as these it was, perhaps, that Second Marriages were so coarsely treated, and those engaged in them esteemed little different from Criminals: for without such Uncharitableness, the Apostle's words, *1 Tim. 3.* *That a bishop or deacon should be the husband of one wife,* would have made nothing against them; those implying either the not having more Wives than one at a time; or
 else

* Chrysoft de
 Virginitat.

† Greg. Nyf.
 de Creat. Hom.

else the taking another Wife, after one had been for incompetent reasons, divorc'd: Both of which were forbidden by our Lord. But where neither of these two Cases were, a man might be termed the Husband of One Wife, in St. Paul's meaning, though he were a second time entred into Marriage. And truly the condemning of *Jovinian* for an Heretick, by Pope *Siricius* and his Clergy at *Rome*, on no other evidence than his having asserted in a Discourse, *That Widows and Married Women were not to be less regarded than Virgins, if they have the same Virtues,* (for tho he maintain'd some other Opinions, which St. *Jerom* afterward answered, yet they were not at that time considered) was so very severe, that a charitable man would be loth to have been of the Jury. The Council of *Gangra*, for the correcting these Errors, which in her time did much prevail, made the Ninth and Tenth Canons against those who kept their *Virginity out of an abhorrence of Marriage, and insulted over those who were in the Conjugal state.*

And yet though Celibacy was enjoined by a Law to Bishops, Priests, and Deacons in the *West*, there was no such Law in the *East*, but the Clergy there had the liberty of Marrying, if they thought good; and some of the best Character did not refuse to do it. Even in this our Nation, till the year 1102, Marriage was

Cambd. Bri-
tan. Devonsh.

not forbidden to the Clergy. 'And
'when *Anselm* then forbad it, our
'Writers of those days complain
'of him, as forcing Scripture and Nature. And
'tho some thought it a matter of the greatest
'Purity, yet others took it to be most perilous ;
'left while by this means they aimed at
'Cleanness above their power, they should
'fall into horrible Uncleanness, to the exceed-
'ing great shame of Christianity. This may
justly be said, That it would be much for the
Reputation of those who are in that state
which they call the more Pure one, if they
carried it so chastly as they do who are in
(as 'tis termed) the more Impure. Which
yet though it be so far from *Impure*, that it
is in its own nature lawful, yea holy, and
such as they have a Right to, they do not
against Laws break into, but by the Statutes
of the Realm are allow'd it. A thing which
as it shews the Ground of the Censure against
the Clergy's Children to be vain, so it may like-
wise encourage their being well thought of, and
favourably accepted.

But as the Ground of their being censu-
red is *vain*, so their *proving generally worse*
than others is very *falsely* laid to their Charge.
They are indeed, together with the Chil-
dren of the Laity, in a world full of Dan-
gers, Temptations, and Troubles; and so
they

they are subject to the like Miscarriages with them, which they too often fall into. And the Fathers of some of these are made sad by their Extravagancies, as well as other Fathers are by some of theirs, the more is the pity on either hand. But yet we can hardly look abroad, but we find the Instances thick sown (and amongst them (I speak it without Flattery-) in a more eminent manner, your self) on whom God's Blessing manifestly appears, and who have abundantly answered the chearful hopes that were once conceived of them. But it *then* chiefly appears that this Censure, with all its uncharitableness, is quite thrown to the ground, when *These* shew themselves in a *Body* at those *Annual Feasts* which in some Countries are kept up, for the *convincing their Adversaries* that they are not those *ill-proving* and *un-blest Numbers* which they would make them; for the *exercising their Love* and Kindness one to another; and for the *expressing of their Charity* in the *placing out* some of their own *Quality*, who are *Orphans* or *Poor*. If to be, some of them in very Creditable, and some in Honourable Stations in the Church; if to be of worthy Professions and Callings in the State, and of great account in them, as many of them cannot but be own'd to be; if to enjoy fair Estates, and to have Souls large enough so to use them, as to

be thought not unworthy of them ; yea, if to have, when in meaner Circumstances, those who in Generosity and Pity will look after and provide for them, be the *being unblest*, and the *proving worse* than others, they *then* are indeed unblest, and do prove extremely ill. But if these things now mentioned be the Marks and Expressions of God's Favour (and what Marks and Expressions of it, with respect to Temporals, can there be greater than these?) the Children of Ministers, in general speaking, are most falsely said to be destitute of them, and ill-proving and unblest. I cannot yet, methinks, be so very much moved at those who have been the first in raising, and are the chief in nourishing this Report against them ; since it hath fallen upon such, who as they are of Wit enough to vindicate themselves, so are of Learning and Courage enough also to lay open and overthrow the Errors and Superstition of those their Adversaries. And it may be a great pleasure to think, that as our famous Nurseries of good Literature send forth large Numbers into the Church, so these (to their great Honour we speak it) send Recruits thither, as many as, perhaps more than, any other Professions do: And in all Faculties there they both deserve and find Encouragement accordingly.

Let

Let us now see what Reason there may be, not only for their not *proving worse*, but for their rather *proving better* than others. And indeed there is something in their Education which may more than ordinary entitle them to God's Blessing. The Clergy's Office, we know, is not only to Preach to the well-grown, but to instruct the Youth also, committed to their Charge. Which they are to do (and we doubt not but they in the generality do it) out of Conscience towards God, and sincere endeavours to plant in them Vertue and Piety. And Prayers are to accompany these their Endeavours for the bringing them to good effect. Now what they do to *others* more at large, we cannot but think they do to their own in a peculiar and more uninterrupted manner, as being always near them. And from more frequently repeated Precepts, we may reasonably imagine that the grounds of Duty will be the surelier laid. Not that many other Parents are not to be thought very solicitous and highly industrious, for the breeding up their Children: But comparing the Number of these with a like Number of others, it will not be *uncharitable* to think that *More* of *These* are more religiously bent than are of *Those others*. And being continually engaged in the search of Divine Things (which shew themselves with the greater *Strength* and

and Beauty, where with a Devout Mind they are most look'd into) they may justly be esteemed to be *more concerned* for the *propagating them abroad*; but chiefly for the doing it in those who are in a more close Tye a *part of themselves*. Thus Sacred Precepts being instill'd, and the Dispositions of their Children inform'd with other suitable Parts of Education; and both followed with Blessings and Prayers from a *Priest's Mouth* in a *Father's*, they are the better fitted for doing well, and for the Divine Favour to go along with them.

In what hath been said, those of the *Female Sex* have been concerned as well as others. It yet may not seem too much to take at least thus far particular notice of them, as to observe, That in the Beginning of the Reformation, almost as soon as the Daughters of the Married Clergy could be ripe for such a Blessing, there is a very remarkable Instance in favour of them, from the *Five Daughters* of *Barlow Bishop of Bath and Wells*; who were all of so great Esteem and Worth, as to be married every one of them to a Bishop. The eldest, *Frances*, was married first to *Matthew Parker*, Son to Archbishop *Parker*, but after his Death, to Dr. *Mathews*, *Archbishop of York*. The Second to *Wickham Bishop of Winchester*. The Third

to Overton Bishop of Covent. and Litchfield. The Fourth to Westphaling Bishop of Hereford. The Fifth to Day Bishop of Winchester. All which is inscribed at large on the Monument of Frances the Eldest, who lies Buried in the Church of York.

Were it meet to make the Search onwards, and to give an account thereof, I doubt not but as large a number of Discreet, *well-disposed*, and (I may say) *well-dispos'd of* Women might be found proportionably to have descended from Clergy-men, as from any others whatsoever. And as to *those of the present Generation*, their equally sharing with the Males in the *Father's* Pious Care and Example; and their having a more appropriated Pattern from the *Mother's* Deportment; who (to say no more than truth of them) are for the most part *very Skilful and Charitable Persons* in the Places where they live, may more than ordinarily sway with them, (if the *Gaiety of the Age* be not too much attended to) to be every way such as we would wish they should be. And if they be not more Grave, Stay'd, and Religious, than usually others are, they have the more to answer for.

Yet amidst the being thus fitted for the proving good Men and Women in what
Callings

Callings or Stations soever they are placed, a Friendly Admonition may not be altogether superfluous and of no use. Let them then have a *greater* Care of themselves, because they lye under *so ill a Censure*; and resolve to shew it to be as false as it is uncharitable. It will be highly disingenuous in them, if *They* shall stray from the *Paths of Virtue*; since thereby they throw a Scandal upon their *Fathers Marriage*, and the Allowances of *God* and the *Church*. Their and our Enemies will triumph in such an Argument; which however fallacious it be, will strike *nearer the Heart* than all their *other* will do, though never so strongly urged; and perchance will render some of our *own* (otherwise well-meaning Persons) less affected to our Clergy, from such an Unhappiness in any of their Children. And a *Misery* joined with *Contumely* and *Disrespect*, becomes a double one. Some there are that never do any thing better than by *Opposition*. I had almost said, Let These live well *in spite of Those* who would have it otherwise; and redeem a Truth that cannot be lost, but by the loss also of their Virtue, and their own and Fathers Joy. They will cast a great Reflection on *God's Providence*, if they shall make room for a Censure, that denies his Favour to lye in common to *Them*, as well as to *Others*; which to their *Honour* may
on

on their part be *greater* ; but without their *very great Shame* cannot be *less*. For that Favour is chiefly shewn in the *being truly Virtuous and Religious* ; which where can it more advantageously be accomplished, than in those who spring from Persons *Sacred at God's Altar* ; and who are presumed to have wanted no Instruction for the being every way compleat ?

And now, Sir, having drawn this Letter to a much greater length than I intended, it is full time, (and I believe your self think so) to take leave of you. Which yet I cannot do without adding two or three lines more (and these you will allow me) in this *heartly wish*. That the *Reverse* of the Charge against a numerous Off-spring may fall upon all yours. That their Actions may be as laudable as their Number is great. That their way of Living may be free and generous, yet prudent ; that is, like your own. That no sorrow may proceed from them to your Self at all ; nor to any else, but in their Deaths alone ; and this (long after your Decease) in extream old Age ; such as I pray and hope yours may be. And that in a plentiful provision made for them all by you at home, with large additions which they shall meet with abroad, your Name may flourish in Them and Theirs, for many Ages.
And

124 *A Discourse concerning the &c.*

And (which is the chief of all) that you, and every one of them, may hereafter meet in Heaven. The Friendship which you have always shewn towards me, will, I hope, pardon this Paper, since it comes wholly out of good will and respect to you, from him, who is, Sir,

Your most Affectionate

and Humble Servant.

E R R A T A.

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